



Compliments, Comments, Concerns and Complaints Policy

Every year Merton Centre for Independent Living supports several hundred disabled people in Merton. We are committed to delivering the highest level of service for all our users.

Lots of people are satisfied with the services we offer, and we are always happy to hear about what went well for people.

But, sometimes someone tells us they weren't happy and they would like to see improvements. Perhaps they had to wait to speak with us, only to find out that there is very little we can do for them. Perhaps they felt that they were not treated with respect or courtesy. Perhaps our support didn't achieve the outcome they wanted.

Unfortunately, these things happen. We know we are not perfect even though we try very hard to get things right. That is why we have a complaints process. Sometimes we can put things right; sometimes all we can do is say sorry. But we will always try to learn from what went wrong and do better next time.

We will treat what you tell us confidentially, seriously and quickly.

What is the complaints process?

Stage 1: Tell us what you think

There are lots of ways to comment on our service. We phone a random selection of people on a regular basis, so if we call you, please provide feedback. We also do an annual survey and we

have a comments box in the office. However, if you are particularly concerned, worried, or unhappy with any aspect of our service the first person to speak to is the worker delivering the service. The worker will talk to you about the issue, make a note of your concern and try to sort it out straight away. We call this stage raising a concern. We still take everything you tell us seriously, and we aim to sort things out quickly at this stage.

You can raise a concern by contacting the person supporting you directly, by telephoning our office on 020 3397 3119, by emailing info@mertoncil.org.uk or by using the form at the end of this document. If you need to use SMS because you are deaf or hard of hearing, please use 0744 936 2233.

If you are not happy with the response at this stage, or the plan of action didn't work, or you think your concern is too serious to deal with this way, you can go to the next stage.

Stage 2: Making a complaint

You can make a complaint by telephoning 020 3397 3119, by emailing info@mertoncil.org.uk or by using the form at the end of this document. If you need to use SMS because you are deaf or hard of hearing, please use 0744 936 2233. Some people might need support to make a complaint. We suggest using an organisation like your local Citizens Advice to support you.

When you make a complaint, your complaint will usually be reviewed by Merton CIL's Service Manager. But where the Service Manager is not available, another member of the Senior Management Team, appointed by the CEO, will investigate. If your complaint is about the Service Manager, the CEO will investigate. If your complaint is about the CEO, a Trustee will investigate. Sometimes we might ask you to go through Stage 1 if you haven't already done so, as we believe this is the most successful way of addressing issues in the first instance.

If we agree with your complaint, you will get an apology and, where appropriate, be given details of any action that we are taking to put things right. This might mean we look at our processes or give our staff some training.

We aim to provide a Stage 2 response within one calendar month of the start of Stage 2.

Stage 3. Appeal

If you are not satisfied with the outcome at Stage 2, you can ask for a further review, which means that the next most senior person will look into it. This would usually be the CEO. The person reviewing the complaint at this stage will ask you to explain why you are appealing. He or she will look at the original complaint and at how it was addressed. Where your complaint is about the CEO, the Stage 3 review will be carried out by the Chair of the Trustees or a Trustee appointed by the Chair.

We will aim to respond in full to your complaint within six weeks of the start of Stage 3. However, if the issue is complicated, any delay will be explained and you will be kept informed of progress.

There are no further complaint stages after this and any decision at Stage 3 will be final.

What counts as a complaint?

This process is only for people who have used or are using our services. Disabled people who live in Merton and have tried to use our services can also use this process if they need to.

There are a few examples where we **won't** be able to deal with something through the complaints process.

For example:

- If the matter is being or has been dealt with through legal action or an insurance or liability claim you can't use this process for the same issue.
- If the cause for complaint is more than 6 months old but is only reported now, unless there is good reason for delay.
- If the complaint is an attempt to reopen a previously concluded complaint where we have already given our final decision.

Our complaints procedure is based around effective and open communication between us and the service user to agree a resolution to the complaint.

We recognise that sometimes a minority of people can be unreasonably persistent or aggressive in pursuing their complaints, and that this can affect our staff's ability to review and respond to a complaint, or to provide a service.

Where the contact from the customer is unreasonably persistent or vexatious, we may choose to close the complaint at any stage with a final letter outlining our actions and response to the issues originally raised by the service user.

<p>Date this policy came into effect 01/10/2014. Date refreshed/approved with new logo and structure: 26/01/2016. 31/03/2016 changed review date. 26/10/2017 refreshed with input from M&E Group. 09/11/2018 Updated to include what to do when complaint is about CEO. 26/04/2019 Response time at Stages 2 and 3 clarified.</p>	<p>Date approved by Governing Body 16th Sept 2014</p>
<p>Next Review Date: 25 April 2020</p>	
<p>Name or position of person responsible for this policy</p>	<p>CEO</p>



Compliments, Comments, Concerns and Complaints Form

You do not have to give your name and address but we will not be able to contact you without your details.

Name:

Address:

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Phone number:Email

I wish to make the following:

Compliment Comment

Concern Complaint

Please return form to:

Service Manager
Merton CIL
Wandle Valley Resource Centre, Church Road, Mitcham, CR4 3BE

Or info@mertoncil.org.uk

