

COMPLAINTS AND COMPLIMENTS POLICY AND PROCEDURE

REVIEW DUE: NOVEMBER 2022
POLICY: 1.13

1.13.1 PURPOSE OF THE POLICY

To provide a process by which service users and other agencies can make a complaint and/or compliment regarding Bromley & Croydon Women's Aid (BCWA) services and decisions. This will also provide information on how BCWA will manage the complaint and timeframes for doing so.

1.13.2 RELATED POLICIES AND PROCEDURES:

- Whistle blowing Policy
- Equal Opportunities Policy
- Data Protection

1.13.3 POLICY STATEMENT

Bromley & Croydon Women's Aid (BCWA) welcomes all complaints and compliments as a way of improving services.

BCWA considers all complaints to be an expression of dissatisfaction in the service. We will listen and respond to all complaints made by service users and other agencies as they relate to our services and decisions. We will consider all complaints seriously, investigate their origins and provide a written response to the named complainant. BCWA seeks to continuously improve our service and uses this complaints process as a method through which we can resolve customer dissatisfaction.

Copies of this complaint's procedure will be made available to all BCWA service users, referring agencies and funders.

1.13.4 COMPLIMENTS

1.13.4.1 Introduction

For the purpose of this policy a compliment is an expression of appreciation of a service received from Bromley & Croydon Women's Aid. It can be made towards an individual or team about the actions or series of actions they have completed in relation to the work we do.

A compliment is not an expression of appreciation about an individual's appearance, their interests or their material possessions. Compliments should not be solicited.

1.13.4.2 Our standards for responding to compliments

All compliments should be responded to appropriately and professionally. If a compliment is received about service delivery, staff should thank the individual for their comments and inform them that we would like to record this on our database.

1.13.4.3 Monitoring & Record Keeping

Every quarter the service improvement project group will review any Complaints and Compliments to learn from the feedback received to identify and address any patterns regarding service delivery.

A summary of complaints and compliments received will be reported to the Trustees. Opportunities for learning and service improvement should be identified and discussed with the team. Where policies and procedures may need amending to reflect best practice this should be disseminated across the whole of the organisation.

1.13.5 INTRODUCTION

Complaints may be made in person, by telephone, post and/or email.

Those who make complaints will not be victimised. Bromley & Croydon Women's Aid encourages people (service users, other agencies, funders and members of the community) to discuss any concerns with BCWA staff as early as possible. Making a complaint will not affect the provision of services. Where necessary, BCWA will provide interpreting and translating facilities for any complainant needing language support. BCWA will refer a complainant to another organisation should they require assistance in making their complaint.

Where possible, we encourage complainants to provide their name and contact details. Anonymous complaints may be more difficult to investigate, resolve and provide feedback on. Where an anonymous complaint is received, BCWA will investigate, to the best of our ability, but may not be able to provide feedback to the complainant.

All complaints will be dealt with in accordance with the Data Protection Act 1998 and

1.13.6 PROCEDURE FOR MAKING AND RESPONDING TO COMPLAINTS

1.13.6.1 Service Users (Refuge)

Complaints by service users regarding the refuge and/or residents in the refuge must be made to their Refuge Support Officer.

Complaints by residents regarding their Refuge Support Officer must be emailed to management@bcwa.org.uk or in writing to PO Box 71158 SE20 9BU.

1.13.6.2 Outreach Clients, Agencies, funders or members of the community

Complaints by outreach clients, other agencies, funders or members of the community must be emailed to management@bcwa.org.uk or in writing to PO Box 71158 SE20 9BU.

1.13.6.3 Assistance for Service Users to make a complaint

Where a service user requires assistance from BCWA to lodge a complaint, an appointment will be made for the service user and BCWA staff member, within 2 working days of the initial request.

During this meeting, details of the complaint will be written down by the person making the complaint or the staff member.

The following details are to be recorded in order for BCWA to begin investigating:

- Date, time and location of incident
- Details of others involved in incident and/or witnesses to incident
- Full description of incident
- Indication from complainant about the outcome they would like to see achieved from complaint.

1.13.6 PROCEDURE FOR MAKING AND RESPONDING TO COMPLAINTS (cont.)

1.13.6.4 Dealing with a complaint

The investigative officer will acknowledge a formal complaint in writing within 2 working days of receipt. The complaint will be given a timeline for a response within 5 working days either by email, telephone or in writing.

Where necessary the investigative officer will contact the complainant to get further details about the incident in question and agree a list of actions and timeframes, agreed by both parties in order that the investigation of the complaint proceeds in a transparent manner.

The investigative officer will undertake to speak with other people/witnesses regarding the incident to gather additional views and feedback. This will be completed within 7 working days of the first contact.

After investigation, the investigative officer will offer the complainant an assessment of the incident and where appropriate, schedule of next steps to be taken in order to fully resolve the complaint. This information will be provided to the complainant in a letter or email, whichever is preferable to the complainant. Feedback on the complaint will be provided to the complainant no more than 10 working days after first contact.

The BCWA investigative officer is responsible for ensuring complaints are investigated and where possible resolved within the stated timeframes.

In the event that the investigative officer is unavailable, the complainant will be informed of any delays that may occur and will be provided with a reasonable alternative timeframe.

Where a complaint is deemed to be serious the Bromley & Croydon Women's Aid CEO will inform the Board of the nature of the complaint, planned actions and the outcome.

In the event that the complainant is not satisfied with BCWA's response, an appeal may be lodged.

Copies of all complaints are stored securely.

1.13.7 APPEALING THE OUTCOME OF A FORMAL COMPLAINT

If complainant is not satisfied with the outcome of their complaint, they may appeal in writing to the Bromley & Croydon Women's Aid CEO or in the case that the Bromley & Croydon Women's Aid CEO was the investigative officer, to the Chair of BCWA Management Committee. The complainant will need to provide information relating to their original complaint and include reasons for the appeal. All appeals should be made within one calendar month of receipt of the outcome of their original complaint.

The Bromley & Croydon Women's Aid CEO or Chair of BCWA Management Committee will carry out necessary investigations and will write to the complainant detailing the outcome of the appeal within 10 working days of first receiving the appeal.

If the complainant remains unsatisfied at the end of this internal BCWA investigatory process, they will be referred to a relevant regulatory body.