

COMPLIMENTS AND COMPLAINTS

POLICY AND PROCEDURE



1. OUR AIM

Active Nation is committed to providing a quality service and working in an open and accountable way that builds trust and respect. One of the ways in which we can continue to improve our service is by listening and responding to the views of our supporters (our customers), and in particular by responding positively to complaints, and by putting mistakes right.

Therefore we aim to ensure that:s

- making a compliment or complaint is as easy as possible
- we welcome compliments, feedback and suggestions
- we treat a complaint as a clear expression of dissatisfaction with our service which calls for an immediate response
- we deal with it promptly, politely and, when appropriate, confidentially
- we respond in the right way - for example, with an explanation, or an apology where we have got things wrong, or information on any action taken etc.
- we learn from complaints, use them to improve our service, and review annually our complaints policy and procedures

We recognise that many concerns will be raised informally, and dealt with quickly.

Our aims are to:

- resolve informal concerns quickly
- keep matters low-key
- enable mediation between the complainant and the individual to whom the complaint has been referred

This policy ensures that we welcome compliments and provide guidelines for dealing with complaints from members of the public about our services, facilities, staff and volunteers.

2. Definitions

A compliment is an expression of satisfaction about the standard of service we provide.

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A complaint is defined as any expression of dissatisfaction; however, it is expressed. This would include complaints expressed face to face, via a phone call, in writing, via email or any other method. All staff should have sufficient knowledge to be able to identify an “expression of dissatisfaction” even when the word “complain” or “complaint” is not used.

3. Purpose

We are always glad to hear from people who are satisfied with the services we offer. All compliments are recorded, acknowledged, and a copy is sent to the relevant campaigner (staff member) to provide feedback.

4. Complaints

The formal complaints procedure is intended to ensure that all complaints are handled fairly, consistently and wherever possible resolved to the complainant's satisfaction.

5. Responsibilities

Active Nation’s responsibility will be to:

- acknowledge the formal complaint in writing;
- respond within a stated period of time;
- deal reasonably and sensitively with the complaint; and
- take action where appropriate.

A complainant's responsibility is to:

- bring their complaint, in writing, to Active Nation’s attention promptly following the issue arising;
- raise concerns promptly and directly with a member of staff in an Active Nation Venue;
- explain the problem as clearly and as fully as possible, including any action taken to date;
- allow Active Nation a reasonable time to deal with the matter, and
- recognise that some circumstances may be beyond Active Nation’s control.

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6. Confidentiality:

Except in exceptional circumstances, every attempt will be made to ensure that both the complainant and Active Nation maintain confidentiality. However the circumstances giving rise to the complaint may be such that it may not be possible to maintain confidentiality (with each complaint judged on its own facts). Should this be the case, the situation will be explained to the complainant.

7. Complaints Procedure:

Written records must be made by Active Nation's Venue or Operations at each stage of the procedure.

Stage 1

In the first instance, campaigners (staff members) must establish the seriousness of the complaint. An informal approach is appropriate when it can be achieved. But if concerns cannot be satisfactorily resolved informally, then the formal complaints procedure should be followed.

Stage 2

If the complaint cannot be resolved informally, the supporter (customer) should be advised that a formal complaint may be made and the following procedure should be explained to them. It may sometimes be appropriate for a different member of staff, preferably a member of the General Management Team, to make this explanation.

- a) A formal complaint can be made either verbally or in writing. If in writing the complaint must be made via email. If verbally, a statement should be taken by a member of the General Management Team or Duty Manager.
- b) In all cases, the complaint must be passed on to the General Management Team. In the event of a complaint about an operational member of staff, the complaint should be passed to the Duty Manager and if the complaint is about the Duty Manager this must be passed on to Venue or Operations Manager.
- c) The Venue or Operations Manager (or Assistant Business Manager, depending on the nature of the complaint) must acknowledge the complaint in writing within one week of receiving it.
- d) The Venue or Operations Manager will investigate the complaint. Any conclusions reached should be discussed with the staff member involved and their Line Manager.

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- e) The person making the complaint will receive a response based on the investigation within two weeks of the complaint being received. If this is not possible then a letter must be sent explaining why.

Stage 3

- a) If the complainant is not satisfied with the above decision, then the Assistant Business Manager's email address will be provided. The complainant must make their complaint and reason for escalation in writing, via email.
- b) The Assistant Business Manager responsible for the region will examine the complaint and may wish to carry out further interviews, examine notes. They will respond within four weeks in writing. Their decision will be final.