



COMPLAINTS POLICY

This Policy has been approved & authorised by:

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Position: CEO

Date: 03/12/2025

Signature: 

This Policy has been approved & countersigned by:

Name: Tim Phillips

Position: Director

Date: 03/12/2025

Signature: 

Policy last reviewed on: 26/11/2025

Policy last reviewed by: MS

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HUMAN RESOURCES POLICY TRACKING SHEET

Amendment	Reason for amendment	Date
<i>Policy Reviewed</i>	<i>No Changes</i>	<i>13/11/2019</i>
<i>Policy Reviewed</i>	<i>No Changes</i>	<i>02/02/2021</i>
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<i>Policy Reviewed</i>	<i>No Changes</i>	<i>16/03/2023</i>
<i>Policy Reviewed</i>	<i>Statement of Intent edit pg 3</i>	<i>11/09/2023</i>
<i>Policy Reviewed</i>	<i>No Changes</i>	<i>25/09/2024</i>
<i>Policy Reviewed</i>	<i>Pg3 clarification on who can complain</i>	<i>07/08/2025</i>
<i>Policy Reviewed</i>	<i>Full policy review and rewrite to include best practice and legislative updates and alignment with updated policies.</i>	<i>26/11/2025</i>

Complaints Policy

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1. Introduction

Wellbeing Enterprises CIC is committed to providing high-quality, safe, respectful and person-centred services. We welcome feedback and recognise that complaints help us learn, improve, and strengthen trust. Everyone who engages with the organisation has the right to raise concerns or complaints without fear of disadvantage.

This policy explains how complaints can be made, how they are handled, and what complainants can expect. It applies to:

- Beneficiaries (clients), carers and families
- Partners, referrers and agencies
- Members of the public
- Anyone affected by our actions or decisions

Complaints relating to staff conduct, safeguarding concerns, discrimination or confidentiality are handled with additional care and may follow specialist procedures, as outlined below.

This policy must be read alongside the:

- Safeguarding Children and Safeguarding Adults Policies
- Data Protection Policy
- Security Policy
- Whistleblowing Policy
- Code of Conduct
- Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy

2. Definitions

Complaint

A complaint is an expression of dissatisfaction about our service, decisions, actions, behaviours, or quality of care, where a response or resolution is expected.

Concern

A concern is feedback or a minor issue that can usually be resolved quickly and informally.

Safeguarding Concern

Any allegation or information indicating a risk of abuse, harm, neglect or exploitation. These must be handled under the Safeguarding Policies, not this Complaints Policy.

Whistleblowing

Concerns raised by staff or volunteers about malpractice, wrongdoing or risk affecting the organisation. These must follow the Whistleblowing Policy.

3. Principles

All complaints will be handled according to the following principles:

3.1 Accessibility

- Anyone can make a complaint.
- Support, interpreters or reasonable adjustments will be provided on request.
- Complaints may be made verbally, in writing, online or via advocacy.

3.2 Fairness and Respect

- Complainants will be treated with dignity, respect and without discrimination.
- Complaints will be considered objectively and without bias.

3.3 Safeguarding

If a complaint indicates that an adult or child may be at risk of harm, it will be referred immediately to the Safeguarding Lead and processed under safeguarding procedures.

3.4 Confidentiality and Data Protection

- Complaint information will be handled securely and lawfully under UK GDPR and the Data Protection Act 2018.
- Only those who need to know will access complaint information.

3.5 Timeliness

- Complaints will be acknowledged within 3 working days.
- Complaints will be resolved as quickly as possible, with updates provided if delays occur.

3.6 Learning and Improvement

We use complaints to strengthen practice, training, systems, and services.

3.7 No Detriment

Making a complaint will not negatively affect access to services.

4. How to Make a Complaint

Complaints may be made:

- In person
- By phone
- By email
- In writing
- Via the website or feedback form
- Through an advocate, supporter, carer, or professional
- Via a translator or interpreter

If someone needs help to complain, we will support them or signpost to advocacy services.

If the complaint relates to the conduct of the CEO or a Director, the matter will be escalated to the Board's Chair.

5. Complaints Procedure

We operate a three-stage process:

Stage 1: Informal Resolution

Wherever appropriate, complaints should be addressed informally by the team member, manager or service lead most directly involved.

Timescale: within 10 working days

This stage may include:

- clarifying the concern
- offering an apology
- providing information
- resolving misunderstandings
- agreeing actions

If the complainant is not satisfied, they may request a formal review under Stage 2.

Stage 2: Formal Complaint Investigation

A complaint becomes formal when:

- the issue cannot be resolved informally
- the complainant requests a formal process
- the matter involves conduct, safety, discrimination or confidentiality

- the concern is serious or complex

At this stage:

- Acknowledgement within 3 working days
- An Investigating Officer is appointed (not previously involved)
- Information is gathered objectively
- The complainant may submit additional evidence
- A written outcome is provided explaining findings and actions

Timescale: within 20 working days, unless complexity requires more time (in which case the complainant will be updated).

If the complainant is dissatisfied, they may request Stage 3 review.

Stage 3: Independent Review

Where dissatisfaction remains after Stage 2:

- The complaint will be reviewed by a senior manager or Director not previously involved.
- In some circumstances, the Board may commission an external reviewer.

The Stage 3 reviewer will consider:

- Whether the investigation was fair and reasonable
- Whether the decision reached was appropriate
- Whether processes were followed correctly
- What further action (if any) should be taken

A written outcome will be provided.

This decision is final within the organisation.

6. Safeguarding, Serious Misconduct and Criminal Allegations

Complaints involving any of the following will immediately be escalated outside this procedure:

- Allegations of abuse, neglect or exploitation
- Harm to a child or vulnerable adult
- Fraud, corruption, criminal behaviour
- Serious breaches of the Code of Conduct
- Serious confidentiality or data breaches

These will follow:

- Safeguarding procedures
- Disciplinary procedures
- Data Protection breach procedures
- Whistleblowing procedures
- Police or local authority referral (where required)

The complainant will be informed of the escalation.

7. Unreasonable or Persistent Complaints

We will always treat complainants fairly and respectfully. However, in rare circumstances, where behaviour becomes unreasonable or abusive, the organisation may:

- set communication boundaries
- restrict communication channels
- assign a single point of contact
- decline repeated complaints about the same issue

Any such decision will be approved by the CEO or Board.

Where a complainant's behaviour becomes unreasonable, persistent or abusive, the organisation may apply the Persistent and Vexatious Complaints Policy.

8. Recording, Storage and Confidentiality

- All formal complaints will be recorded securely.
- Complaint records will include the issue, investigation steps, outcome and actions.
- Records will be stored in accordance with the Data Protection Policy.
- Complaint data will be retained for 6 years, unless safeguarding or legal processes require longer.
- Complaint data will not be stored on personal devices or email.
- Access is limited to authorised staff only.

9. Learning from Complaints

The organisation is committed to improvement.

- Complaint themes will be reviewed quarterly by the Senior Management Team.
- Annual complaint reports will be shared with the Board.
- Action plans will be developed to address learning.
- Learning will inform training, service design, safeguarding and quality improvement.

10. Monitoring and Review

This policy will be reviewed annually or earlier if required due to:

- legislative change
- learning from complaints
- safeguarding issues
- feedback from beneficiaries
- organisational development