Complaints policy

Respect is committed to providing services of high quality that are inclusive and non–discriminatory. Complaints and feedback are taken seriously and will be handled by the helplines management team. We are also committed to learning from feedback and complaint to reduce the likelihood of recurrence of similar problems.

The procedure outlined below is intended to be used when an agency or individual wishes to complain about the quality of the service they have received on from Respect's helpline's service.

Procedure

1. Service users wishing to complain should submit their complaint as soon as possible after their contact with the helpline. Our Helpline Advisors deal with a large volume of calls each day and it is very difficult to remember details for each contact. As outlined in the Confidentiality Policy, calls to Respect's helpline's service are not recorded.

2. Complaints can be received via telephoning the helpline, email info@respect.org.uk or letter to Respect, VAI, Second Floor, 200a Pentonville Road, London N1 9JP for the attention of the Helplines Team Leader. The Helplines Team Leader will acknowledge receipt of the complaint within 5 working days and outline the next steps for the investigation.

3. If the complaint is about the Helplines Team Leader, the complaint should be marked for the attention of the Head of Helplines.

4. Where possible and appropriate, we will attempt to resolve the matter informally, but where required and at the discretion of the complainant, the matter will be dealt with formally.

5. The Helplines Team Leader will be the investigating officer. They will examine all information relating to the complaint including speaking with the complainant and Helpline Advisor concerned.

6. After the investigation has been completed, the investigating officer will reply to the complainant with the outcome within ten working days from the date of acknowledgment. If this is not possible the investigating officer will explain why to the complainant and let them know when they can expect a reply by.

7. If the complaint is upheld, this could result in re–training the helplines team member involved or disciplinary proceedings for serious policy breaches.

8. If the complainant remains dissatisfied after the investigation is completed, they can appeal the decision to the Head of Helplines. The appeals process is as follows:

    - Complainants must submit their appeal within five working days of receiving the investigating officer's reply;
    - The appeal will be sent to the Head of Helplines stating the reasons why they remain dissatisfied with the outcome of the investigation;
    - After consideration of the appeal the decision of the Head of Helplines will be final and there will be no further recourse to appeal.
    - The complainant will be informed of the final decision within a month.

9. The helplines management team will maintain an electronic complaints file, which records the details of all complaints and the results of the investigations. Any records containing sensitive information and/or identifying service users will be kept secure and confidential for 6 months. After 6 months all records will be permanently deleted.

10. Respect will ensure that Helplines team members have read and understood the Complaints Policy to be clear with service users who wish to complain on the process.

11. Feedback and information from complaints will be used to improve the helplines service overall and develop a successful service.

Reviewed: December 2025

Next review date: December 2028