

PEOPLE FIRST HOUSING ASSOCIATION

Manchester Office Northwich Office

179 Royce Road 54A Station Road
Hulme Northwich
M15 5TJ CW9 5RB
Tel: (0161) 226 1917 Tel: (01606) 333731
Fax: (0161) 232 8422 Fax: (01606) 40768

Tameside Office Rochdale Office

63-65 Grosvenor Street 5 Fenwick Street
Stalybridge Rochdale
SK15 2JN OL12 6XE
Tel: (0161) 331 2714 Tel: (01706) 647693
Fax: (0161) 331 2102 Fax: (01706) 649868

Web: www.peoplefirsthousing.co.uk

E-mail: admin@peoplefirsthousing.co.uk

People First HA is registered under the Industrial and Provident Societies Act 1965, Registration Number 27746R. It has Charitable Status.

People First aims to promote equality of access to all.



COMPLAINTS POLICY

People First Housing Association aims to provide a high level of service. To help us achieve this we welcome feedback from the people who use our services. Complaints are viewed positively as a means of being able to improve services. Our primary focus is on putting problems right where the service has failed.

WHAT IS COVERED BY THIS POLICY?

You can use this policy to complain about anything People First does: You can complain about our services, our staff, our contractors or anyone else who works on our behalf. The policy can be used by anybody who comes into contact with People First, including clients, tenants, licensees and applicants.

The policy is not designed to handle complaints about third parties. For example, if you wish to complain about your neighbours, you should refer to our Antisocial Behaviour and/or Racial Harassment policies.

We also have a suggestion scheme for people who would like to suggest improvements to our services, but do not have a specific 'complaint'. Please see our separate leaflet "Compliments and Suggestions" for details.

IF YOU HAVE A COMPLAINT

The first thing you should do is to contact a member of staff. You can express your complaint in any way you choose: in writing, by phone, in person or even by e-mail. Our feedback form – which you should find with this leaflet – might help you organise your thoughts.

We aim to deal with most complaints within one week. If that is not possible (due to complex investigations), we will keep you informed on a weekly basis.

IF YOU REMAIN DISSATISFIED

If you are unhappy with the response you are given – or if you have not had a written response after 28 days – you can ask for the complaint to be taken to the next level. There are five levels altogether, culminating in an appeal to the Housing Ombudsman Service or Supporting People Team.

- Level 1: Initial complaint (to frontline staff)
- Level 2: Formal complaint (to Service Manager)
- Level 3: Formal complaint (to Chief Executive)
- Level 4: Internal appeal (to People First's Board)
- Level 5: External appeal (to the Housing Ombudsman Service or Supporting People Team)

SERIOUS COMPLAINTS

If the complaint is about the member of staff you usually deal with, you should contact the person who manages them. We will accelerate serious complaints to be dealt with at a higher level. Examples of serious complaints are:

- Denial of housing or support
- Allegations of abuse by a member of staff
- Problems with your personal risk assessment

SERVICE STANDARDS

We aim to provide the highest level of service possible. To ensure we do this, we have service standards which set out what you can expect from us:

- **We will accept complaints, compliments and suggestions verbally, in writing, by e-mail, by phone or by any other method of your choice.**
- **We aim to give a full and frank response to complaints within one week. If the investigation is complex and the complaint takes longer to resolve, we will update you about progress at least once every week.**
- **We will report to the Board on the outcome of complaints every six months.**
- **We will keep customers informed about how complaints have been used to improve things.**
- **We will respect individual rights to privacy and confidentiality.**
- **We will offer a non-judgemental and client-centred approach.**
- **We will ensure the complaints policy is published widely at reception desks, on notice boards, on our website and in welcome packs.**

This leaflet is intended as a guide to help you through the early stages of the complaints process. We would be happy to share our full policy and procedure. Please ask a member of staff if you would like a copy.