

## Complaints Policy

Born at the Right Time Limited is committed to providing a high standard of service to all our customers. However, we understand that sometimes customers will feel that they have a reason to complain about the service they have received from us.

We encourage feedback from customers, including complaints, and this policy and procedure outlines our approach to handling any complaints we receive.

For the purpose of this procedure, a customer is anyone who contacts Born at the Right Time Limited to request a service or is receiving a service from us.

Born at the Right Time Limited strives to:

Make it easy and straightforward for customers to make a complaint

Put things right quickly for our customers when they have gone wrong

Keep the complainant informed of the progress of their complaint

Respond to complaints within the published timescales and keep you informed

Review the process at regular interval to ensure it is meeting the needs of customers and the organisation

Seek to learn from complaints to improve future performance

Advise complainants of their right to appeal and how they can do this if they remain dissatisfied after their complaint has been through all the stages of the internal complaints procedure

It must be recognised that customers may not always like the outcome of their complaint but this policy aims to provide reassurance that a thorough investigation of the issues raised will be undertaken.

### What is a complaint?

A complaint is when a customer tells us that they are not happy with the agreed or expected level of service they have received or something we have done/not done and we have not put things right to their satisfaction.

Where a complaint concerns a more serious matter such as health and safety, equality and diversity, safeguarding and Prevent, it should always be dealt with formally (Stage 2).



## How can a complaint be made?

Any customer wishing to make a complaint can do so, by telephone, email, letter, or in person. Every assistance will be offered to any person requiring support to make a complaint. It is helpful if the person making the complaint (i.e. the complainant) can give us as much information as possible.

A complaint can be received by any member of staff who will either:

- Deal with it directly if appropriate e.g. Stage 1
- Pass the information to the Operations Manager so that it may be handled in line with this policy.

## Key responsibilities:

*The Director has overall responsibility for ensuring good customer service and that the process outlined below is followed.*

*All members of staff are required to comply with this policy.*

*All members of staff who deal with any customer complaint are bound by data protection and confidentiality will be respected.*

*The Operations Manager has overall responsibility for the recording and general management of the complaints handling procedure and will report directly to the Director.*

*The Operations Manager will analyse all complaints, identifying any patterns, and prepare an annual report and recommendations for the Director.*

## How will we handle complaints?

The following outlines Born at the Right Time Limited's Complaints Procedure.

### Stage 1 – Informal Complaints

Complaints of a minor / more straightforward nature should be raised quickly with the person responsible with the aim of resolving the problem directly and informally. Born at the Right Time Limited believes that the majority of complaints are capable of being resolved at this stage (Stage 1) within a period of 5 working days.

In the first instance, a person wishing to make a complaint may be asked to speak to a member of staff or one of the managers.

If at the end of Stage 1, the complainant/s is still unsatisfied with the decision, the complainant should follow Stage 2 of the procedure outlined below.

### Stage 2 – Formal Complaints

Formal complaints will be dealt with in a sympathetic way, respecting the dignity of all concerned. The procedure for addressing a formal complaint is as follows:



Formal complaints are to be submitted in writing. Where submitting a written statement, it should state clearly "Complaint" in the subject/heading.

Where the topic of the complaint is a single event or an event which culminated a series of contributory matters. The complaint should be submitted within 10 working days of an alleged incident occurring.

The complaint statement will form the basis of an investigation and should therefore be completed clearly and with as much detail as possible.

The complaint is submitted to the Operations Manager who will log the complaint, keeping a copy of the complaint/complaint form and where necessary, allocate the complaint to the appropriate person. The appropriate person may be:

Operations Manager

Director

Our Safeguarding Lead, where the complaint is a potential Safeguarding issue

The complaint will be acknowledged in writing within 5 working days of being received.

The member of staff handling the complaint will investigate the matter within 20 working days.

This may include speaking with the complainant to clarify their statement if it is unclear.

Where the complaint is found to be valid, the 'Investigator' will recommend any further action thought necessary related to the complaint including, where appropriate, reference to an apprentice's employer.

The 'Investigator' will produce a written outcome on the complaint within 3 working days of the investigation being completed.

A copy of the outcome will be sent to the complainant, to the person about whom the complaint was made (where applicable) and the Operations Manager, where they have not been the 'Investigator'.

Where the complaint was found to be of a Safeguarding nature, the Safeguarding Lead will keep a record. The Operations Manager will be notified of this so that the complaint log may be updated with the outcome.

### **Stage 3 – Appeals**

If the complaint cannot be resolved to the satisfaction of the complainant at the formal stage, they may appeal in writing within 5 working days stating the reasons for their appeal. The complainant will be informed of the person who they are required to appeal to (Appeals Officer) when the Stage 2 outcome has been given, Born at the Right Time will endeavour to appoint an individual who has not been involved in the first two stages of the process when appointing the Appeals Officer.

The 'Appeals Officer' will review the original complaint, the investigation findings and the outcome and may choose to carry out further investigations where they deem it necessary within 20 working days from receipt of the Appeal.



The 'Appeals Officer' will produce a written judgement on the complaint within 3 working days of the review and subsequent investigations being completed. This decision is final.

### **Personal Data and Retention of complaints documentation**

All complaints will be logged and analysed by the Operations Manager to establish whether any patterns or trends are evident which might suggest improvements. Born at the Right Time Limited will correct any adverse trends which can be established.

Documentation relating to formal complaints will be retained securely for a maximum of 6 years.

Born at the Right Time Limited's policy relating to the handling and processing of personal data are located:

<https://www.bornattherighttime.com/wp-content/uploads/2022/12/GDPR-Policy-BatRT-Published.pdf>

### **Timescales**

The timescales within this document are provided as a guide only and it may not always be possible to work within them due to a number of variable factors such as the complexity of the complaint or the availability of relevant persons. Where timescales cannot be met, the complainant will be notified of the reasons for delay and an estimated timescale for response.

### **Confidentiality**

Privacy and confidentiality will be maintained in the handling of complaints except where disclosure is necessary to investigate and progress the complaint. It is Born at the Right Time Limited's expectation that any documentation generated by a complaint will be respected by all parties and treated as confidential.

**Signed** *Rachel Wright*

**Date** 12th July 2023

**Review date** 12th July 2024

