

Complaints Policy

Hammersmith and Fulham Foodbank is committed to delivering a high standard of service to anyone who engages with our work. We believe that the best way to improve our service is by learning from the people who use it.

We welcome comments, compliments and complaints from the people who use our food bank, referral agencies, volunteers and anyone else we come into contact with in our work. These help us to see what we are doing well and where we can make improvements.

We aim to promote an environment where people are encouraged to raise and discuss issues informally and, where necessary, seek solutions to prevent them developing into problems or complaints. However, we recognise that there may be situations where people are not happy with the outcome of an informal discussion or feel that the issue needs to be taken further. In these cases, Hammersmith and Fulham Foodbank has a complaints procedure so that we can work towards a resolution in a fair and transparent manner.

Our promise and commitment

We recognise that there may be times when our services and activities do not meet our stated standards. If this happens, it is important that we know about it as soon as possible so that we can deal with the situation effectively to try to prevent it from happening again and to learn from our mistakes. We promise to take all feedback and complaints seriously and to deal with them in a timely manner.

Hammersmith & Fulham Foodbank undertakes to ensure that:

- Making a complaint is as straightforward as possible.
- Complaints are dealt with promptly, courteously, and discreetly – confidentially when appropriate.
- We will respond decisively with an explanation, an apology where we have been at fault, or information on the outcome.
- We will learn from complaints and use them to make improvements in the way we work.

How to register a complaint or give feedback

We hope that the majority of complaints can be dealt with informally.

If you have a complaint, or would like to share a concern, compliment or comment on any aspect of our service, you can contact us in one of the following ways:

- In person to staff or volunteers at any of our food bank centres
- By phone: 0207 731 3693
- By email: info@hammersmithfulham.foodbank.org.uk

- Write to the following address: Hammersmith and Fulham Foodbank, c/o St Matthew's Church, Wandsworth Bridge Road, London, SW6 2TX

In cases where the formal procedure is more appropriate, we request that they are submitted in the following format:

- In writing, addressed FAO Management at the Hammersmith & Fulham Foodbank, c/o St Matthew's Church, Wandsworth Bridge Road, London, SW6 2TX or by email to info@hammersmithfulham.foodbank.org.uk with 'complaint' in the subject line.
- It should include a full explanation of the problem, how it occurred, and the effect on you.
- Describe what you think we should do to put things right.

What will happen after I complain?

1. We will acknowledge your complaint within five working days of receipt and provide you with the name of the person responsible for investigating the matter on your behalf.
2. The person responsible for the investigation will write to you with their findings and proposed resolution within twenty eight days from receipt of the complaint*.
3. If you are dissatisfied with the outcome of the investigation you may appeal or escalate your concerns to the same contact details as above, letters must be received within twenty one working days of the date on the correspondence notifying you of the outcome of the first investigation.
4. The complaint will be reinvestigated and you will be informed of the outcome within 10 working days*.

* unless the complaint is particularly complex or time-consuming, in which case you will be kept informed of the progress of the investigation and notified of the expected date of completion.

Wherever possible, Hammersmith and Fulham Foodbank will respect your confidentiality and keep your complaint confidential as far as possible. Any information about the complaint will usually only be shared with those who need to know in order to help resolve it. There may, however, be occasions when we cannot provide absolute confidentiality, for example in circumstances where a child or vulnerable adult may be at risk of harm.

Other information

Complaints about **staff behaviour or attitude** will be handled by the line manager of the staff member in question, and in accordance with the Foodbank's disciplinary procedure if appropriate. You will not be given details of the action we have taken as such information is confidential.

If you wish to make a complaint anonymously or do not provide contact details, then we will treat it as a comment and will be unable to advise you of the outcome of the investigation.

If your complaint contains abusive or offensive language, then we reserve the right to not respond. We reserve the right to report any such communication to the Police.

Data Privacy Statement

Hammersmith & Fulham Food bank is a data controller registered with the UK Information Commissioner's Office [Registration Number Z342976X].

We use the personal information that you provide in accordance with the Data Protection Act 2018 to process your complaint. We have a legitimate interest in holding this information in order to be able to monitor and improve our services.

We will collect personal information including your name and contact details, including postal address, telephone number, email address and social media contact information, in order to be able to investigate your complaint and to communicate with you about it. We will also collect sufficient information about the situation that you are contacting us about to be able to understand what has happened and help you seek a resolution to your complaint.

Where your complaint relates to services involving our partners, for example a referral agency or the Trussell Trust, then we may need to share your information with a third party.

We keep this information for 2 years after your complaint has been closed, unless we have a requirement to keep it longer, in which case we will inform you of this. After this time the data will be aggregated and anonymised.

For further information about how we use your personal information see our Privacy Policy – available at <https://hammersmithfulham.foodbank.org.uk/privacy-cookies-policy/>

Rohan Worrall

3/20/2023