



Louth Volunteer Centre Complaints Policy and Procedures

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Last Reviewed	01/03/2021	Approved By	Board
Next Review	28/02/2024	Responsibility	LVC Manager

1. Policy

1.1 Policy Statement	Louth Volunteer Centre is committed to providing a high-quality service to volunteers, volunteer involving organisations, and other individuals and organisations with an interest in our work. We value all feedback as it enables us to improve the service that we provide to our community. We recognise that individuals or organisations may wish to submit a formal complaint. We will 1. Facilitate and process a complaint that is relevant to the services we provide or the staff/volunteers who provide that service 2. Seek to provide first point of contact resolution 3. Deal with a formal complaint in a fair, transparent and timely manner with due regard for equality and safety 4. Treat any complaint received seriously, with sensitivity and in confidence 5. Not respond to abusive or anonymous complaints 6. Prioritise complaints or concerns relating to safety and welfare. Complaints relating to the safety of children will be treated in accordance with Children First 7. Fully investigate complaints in accordance with the procedures outlined below 8. Respond to each complaint in accordance with the procedures outlined below
1.2 Purpose	To set out our code of practice for dealing with complaints and to ensure that they are dealt with and managed fairly, effectively and efficiently
1.3 Scope	This policy applies to complaints relating to the conduct or behaviour of a representative of Louth Volunteer Centre. It does not apply to the relationship between team members and the Board or Directors of Louth Volunteer Centre, which is governed by our grievance and disciplinary procedures. This policy is relevant if an individual or organisation wishes to submit a complaint about the service provided by Louth Volunteer Centre. This policy is not relevant for third party complaints such as that of a volunteer about a Volunteer Involving Organisation, or vice versa. Louth Volunteer Centre provides a referral service and is not responsible for the actions of organisations or volunteers once that

	referral has been completed.
1.4 Responsibilities	The manager is responsible for ensuring that the policy and the procedures in this document are implemented efficiently and effectively. All other staff and volunteers (including Board/Steering Committee members) are expected to facilitate this process.

Procedures

2.1 Facilitating and Handling Complaints

Purpose	To ensure all complaints are dealt with in a fair, transparent, effective and sufficient manner
Responsibility	Board/Steering Committee, Manager, All Staff, Volunteers, Interns
Procedure	Complaints can be made to any board/steering committee member, internal volunteer or member of staff at any time either verbally or in writing. Should a complaint be received the following applies: 2.1.1 Stage 1 – Informal Early Frontline Resolution - Once a complaint is received discuss the complaint with the complainant and attempt to agree a way forward or a solution that suits both parties. - Aim to resolve the complaint immediately where possible. - If required, allow 5 working days to investigate or remedy the issue. - If resolved record the details on the complaints resolution form and file. - If unresolved document the details on the complaints resolution form and inform the complainant that they can make a formal complaint which must be submitted in writing within 5 working days. 2.1.2 Stage 2 – Formal Complaint If the complaint cannot be resolved to the satisfaction of the complainant or if they feel that they cannot make the complaint to a member of staff, the complaint should: - Be submitted in writing within 5 working days of initial contact or the issue arising – using the complaints form – to the Louth Volunteer Centre manager (grainne@volunteerlouth.ie) and/or the Chair of the Board of Louth Volunteer Centre (chair@volunteerlouth.ie) or by post to Old Motor Tax Office, Bolton Street, Drogheda, Co. Louth

	2)The complainant must be contacted within 5 working days to acknowledge receipt of the complaint and outline the course of action to be taken. - Inform the complainant of the name of the person(s) undertaking the investigation. 3)A representative will undertake an investigation of the complaint. The investigation may take different forms depending on the nature of the complaint. This process must be completed within 30 days of receipt of the complaint. (Where the investigation takes greater than 30 days, the complainant must be notified). - Contact the complainant to confirm the details of their complaint and what outcome they are hoping for. 4)Consultation and sharing of details relating to the investigation with relevant or other parties may be required to affect a satisfactory resolution of the issue. We will not share information if we think that this will endanger someone's safety or welfare. 5)When the investigation is complete the complainant will be notified in writing of the outcome electronically or using the complaints resolution form. 6)Where the complainant is not satisfied with the outcome they can ask for a final review to be carried out by an independent person in the organisation. - The request for a review must be submitted in writing within 10 working days. - An independent person will be appointed to carry out the review. The decision from the review will be final. 7) Where the complaint relates to a child or where informing the complainant could create risk to other people the outcome will not be shared. In this instance the complainant will be informed about how they are affected by the action taken
Records	Complaints Form, Complaints Resolution Form, Records of Meetings, Emails

2.2 Complaint outcomes

Purpose	To provide guidance on the potential outcomes of complaints
Responsibility	Board/Steering Committee, Manager, All Staff, Volunteers, Interns
Procedure	Complainants and those processing complaints will be provided by options for resolution. These include but are not limited to 2.2.1 Stage 1 – Informal Early Frontline Resolution Where possible we will always try to resolve a complaint by first contact resolution. Failing this in many cases we should be able to resolve problems informally. Such resolutions may include: • A change in the way we work • An explanation or apology • An agreement to communicate or act differently in future 2.2.2 Stage 2 – Formal Complaint If informal resolution is not possible and/or the complainant wishes to pursue a formal complaint the procedures as outlined in 2.1.2 will be followed. Outcomes from a formal complaint investigation may include: • Formal disciplinary action under the policies of Louth Volunteer Centre, if the complaint is about a Louth Volunteer Centre team member • Changes in formal contracts or policies put in place by Louth Volunteer Centre • A decision to refer the case to another organisation such as the Garda Siochana • Full referral of complaint to relevant organisation re team member concerned. • Closure of complaint without action
Records	Complaints Form, Complaints Resolution Form, Records of Meetings, Emails

3. Monitoring and Review

Monitoring and Review	The manager will monitor any complaints on a weekly basis and report the Louth Volunteer Centre board at the next meeting or sooner if required. The procedure will be reviewed annually by the manager and staff or sooner if required. The policy will be reviewed every three years by the board/steering committee or sooner if required.
Records	Document Control Matrix, Record of Meetings

Appendix A: Complaints Form

Complainants Details			
Name (Print)			
Address			
Phone		Email	
If a third party is acting on your behalf please provide details			
Name (Print)			
Address			
Phone		Email	
Please describe the nature of your complaint as fully as possible (The box will expand as you type or attach additional sheets if required)			
Date the issue occurred.		Date of Complaint	
Signed by: (Complainant or third party representative)			

Appendix B: Complaints Resolution Form

Complainants Details						
Name (Print)						
Address						
Phone		Email				
Complaint Details						
Received by			Date			
Method	In Person		In Writing		Phone	
Nature of the complaint						
Comments						
Outcome						
Signed by: (on behalf of the organisation)				Date		
Signed by: (Complainant or third party representative)				Date		