



# Complaints Policy

## Introduction

This policy applies equally across all Supreme Group businesses (hereafter, “the Company”).

### 1 - Scope

- This policy applies to all Company employees and anyone acting on the Company’s behalf.

### 2 - Purpose and objectives

- The Company wants to ensure we’re giving customers the best service possible but sometimes things don’t go to plan. If this happens, we want to put it right as quickly as practically possible.
- This Policy is designed to outline how the Company will manage complaints to ensure it provides a simple and accessible complaints service.

### 3 - Policy statement

- The Company hopes a customer never has to let us know something has not gone well or that they have been let down by us but if it happens, we need to make it right.
- When a customer tells us about an issue, the Company will try to sort it out straight away. If we cannot resolve problems there and then, we will agree what actions need to be taken, and by when. We will keep customers updated on what we are doing using a communication method that best suits them.
- We expect all our employees (and anyone acting on the Company’s behalf) to take every possible step to assist and support our customers, working promptly to resolve any issues they encounter
- The Company will consider the root cause of an issue to prevent a recurrence.
- The Company will not close a complaint until we have tried everything that we believe can reasonably be done to resolve it, or until we have an agreed action plan in place. When we know the outcome or have an agreed plan in place, the Company will communicate to the customer about all the issues that have been raised.
- Building and maintaining our customers’ trust is at the heart of our approach and we will ensure customers feel we are taking their issues seriously.

### 4 - Policy

#### What is a complaint?

- The Company believes the definition of a complaint to be: ‘An expression of dissatisfaction, however made, about the standard of service, actions or lack of action by the Company, its employees, or those acting on its behalf, affecting an individual or group of individuals.’
- While customers may not use the word ‘complaint,’ if it is evident that they are dissatisfied, we will usually give them the option to make a complaint.

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## Raising complaints in good time

- The Company asks for complaints to be made within a reasonable timeframe ideally within 1 month of the matter arising. Complaints raised after 1 month may not be able to be considered but the Company will make every reasonable attempt to resolve later complaints.
- The Company will use its discretion when considering if a complaint cannot be accepted and will always consider the individual circumstances of the complaint in question.
- Where a decision is made to not accept a complaint, we will provide a clear explanation to the complainant.

## Stage 1 complaints

- When we first receive a complaint, it is known as a 'Stage 1'. The complaint will be logged and acknowledged within 5 working days of receipt.
- We aim to issue a full response to the complainant within 10 working days of logging a complaint. If this is not possible, such as where a complaint is complex, we may need a further 10 working days, and we will let the complainant know why and agree this with them.

## Stage 2 complaints

A complaint can only be taken to Stage 2 after it has received a Stage 1 response. If a complainant is unhappy with a decision received at Stage 1, they have the right to have the decision reviewed. This is known as a 'Stage 2' complaint. We will acknowledge any Stage 2 complaint within 5 working days of receipt.

- A senior manager (overseen by a director) will review how the complaint was handled and the decisions made.
- If a complainant would like their Stage 1 complaint reviewed, they should request this within one month from the date of our Stage 1 response.

The Company aims to have a decision on Stage 2 complaints made within 10 working days. As with Stage 1 complaints, the Company sometimes need extra time to make the right decision, so may take up to a further 10 working days. This will be communicated to the complainant.

In exceptional circumstances the complexity of a case could require an extension for more than the additional 10 working days mentioned above. This will be communicated to the complainant.

## Anonymous complaints and confidentiality

- An anonymous report relating to the Company's services, a member of staff or anyone acting on the Company's behalf will be reported to a Director/ Head of Service/ Senior Manager depending on the information disclosed for the service area for follow up and investigation if appropriate.
- All members of staff are required to adhere to our code of conduct and maintain confidentiality as appropriate to the circumstances. Colleagues managing complaints should seek support when handling a complaint of a sensitive nature or if asked not

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to disclose the identity of the complainant. The Company needs to manage the expectations of our customers, ensuring we can adhere to our complaints process for investigation and resolution and have regard to our duty of care to our customers, employees, and 3rd party contractors.

- It may not be possible to fully investigate a complaint without disclosing the identity of the complainant, and if so, we will ask the complainants permission to do this. While we respect our customers' right to confidentiality, if we don't have this permission, we may not be able to investigate fully.

### **How we will try to put things right**

- The Company will always try to put things right. That usually means getting the customer back to where they should have been before they had a problem.
- For most problems, a genuine apology and putting things right straight away is where it ends.
- Our management team are fully trained and are supported by experts from across the business. Our training ensures we are best placed to manage our customers' complaints in an impartial way and with empathy.
- The things the Company will look at will be:
  - The customer's situation, for example, if they need additional help.
  - How much the customer has been disrupted.
  - How long it's taken to put right.
  - If there's been distress and/or inconvenience.
- If a service goes wrong:
  - The Company will make it easy to tell it what's happened.
  - The Company will ensure it understands what's happened from the customer's viewpoint and look for a solution that works for them.
  - The Company will be clear about what it can and will do, and then do it.
  - The Company will tell the customer who will help them if the issue is complex.
  - The Company will keep in touch until everything is sorted out.

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