

# Citizens Advice Merton and Lambeth

## Complaints Policy

Citizens Advice Merton and Lambeth is committed to providing high quality services to everyone that comes into contact with the charity. As such we welcome all feedback and complaints about the services and support we provide. We recognise there may be occasions when we do not provide a quality service and we can make mistakes. When this happens it is important that you let us know so we can work to resolve the issue as quickly as possible. We therefore suggest you get in touch with the service manager.

If the issue is not resolved, this policy is designed to meet the needs of clients, volunteer and staff members. We will treat your concerns confidentially, seriously and quickly.

### Let us know you are not satisfied

It is important to let us know that you are unhappy and to give us the chance to put things right. Don't be afraid to ask to speak to the service manager – she or he might be able to sort out the problem straight away. Otherwise, move to the more formal process.

If you are not a client, ask the duty manager to explain the Third Party complaints procedure to you.

### Making a formal complaint

Complaints should be addressed to Suzanne Hudson, Chief Executive.

There are several ways to make a complaint:

- **by letter:** You can put the information in a letter and post it to us at: Citizens Advice Merton & Lambeth, 326 London Road, Mitcham, London CR4 3ND or take it into any of our offices;
- **by phone, face-to-face or email:** You can use any of the normal ways of contacting us to ask us to look into your complaint, see our Lambeth Advice and Merton Advice pages for details;
- **via National Citizens Advice:** You can ask national Citizens Advice to refer your complaint to us, either by calling their complaints line on 03000 231 900 or by using the Contact form here. Citizens Advice will assess who is the best person to handle your complaint and ask them to deal with it.

### **Investigating your complaint**

Your complaint will be investigated by a Senior Manager under the direction of our Chief Executive, or by the Chair of Trustees if you are complaining about a Senior Manager.

We aim to respond in full to your complaint in eight weeks. However, if the issue is complicated, any delay will be explained and you will be kept informed of progress.

If your complaint is upheld, you will get a full apology and, where appropriate, be given details of any action that we are taking to put things right.

### **Request a further review**

If you are still not happy with our response, you can request a further review. The review will be conducted under the direction of the national Citizens Advice.

### **Review by an Adjudicator**

Finally, your complaint may go to a person who is entirely separate from the Citizens Advice network. This person is called the Independent Adjudicator. If you want to progress to this stage, you must do so within four weeks of receiving the Citizens Advice review.

### **Financial Ombudsman Service**

The Financial Ombudsman Service provides a free, independent service for clients to solve disputes with not for profit debt advice providers.

The Financial Ombudsman Service will only step in once the local Citizens Advice has had the opportunity to investigate matters, so please contact us first.

If your complaint is about debt advice or if you were seeking advice about your credit record and you are not satisfied with our final response, or if eight weeks have passed since you first let us know about your concerns, you can ask the Financial Ombudsman to review your complaint:

- **By post:** Financial Ombudsman Service South Quay Plaza 183 Marsh Wall London E14 9SR
- **By phone:** • 0800 0 234 567 – free for people phoning from a ‘fixed’ line (eg a landline at home) • 0300 123 9 123 – free for mobile phone users who pay a monthly charge for calls to numbers starting 01 and 02.
- **By email:** [complaint.info@financial-ombudsman.org](mailto:complaint.info@financial-ombudsman.org)

### **The Office of Immigration Services Commissioner (OISC)**

If your complaint is about immigration advice and you are not satisfied with our response, you are entitled to contact The Office of the Immigration Services Commissioner (OISC). The OISC's contact details are:

- **By post:** The Office of the Immigration Services Commissioner, 5<sup>th</sup> Floor, 21 Bloomsbury Street, London, WC1B 3HF
- **By email:** [complaints@oisc.gov.uk](mailto:complaints@oisc.gov.uk)  
**By phone:** 0207 211 1500 or 0345 000 0046

The OISC is the public body which regulates immigration advice and services within the UK. The OISC may review your file as part of their regulatory role.