

Complaints Policy for Members of the Public

1 - Purpose

This policy is intended to ensure that complaints received from members of the public about United Way Toronto and York Region (UWTYR) services and programs are dealt with promptly, consistently and fairly in accordance with UWTYR's high standards. UWTYR recognizes that when a person has a complaint about UWTYR, the way in which his or her complaint is handled is critical to the person's ongoing relationship with UWTYR.

2 - Scope

This policy applies to all complaints received from members of the public (including donors, prospective donors, community members, etc.) about UWTYR operations, which includes the conduct and behaviour of all employees and volunteers.

It does not apply to complaints by agencies about community investment funding process that would be addressed through a separate appeal process.

As UWTYR and its funded agencies are distinct and separate entities with independent governance and management structures, complaints about other related organizations will not be dealt with by UWTYR. UWTYR will refer such complaints to the organization for appropriate action.

3 - Policy

Definition: Complaints are defined as an expression of dissatisfaction with regard to a service/program, an action or a decision taken by United Way, or the way in which United Way employees or volunteers carry out their duties. Complaints typically arise when a person believes:

- UWTYR has failed to do something agreed upon or expected
- A UWTYR policy or procedure has not been followed
- An error has been made
- UWTYR employees or volunteers acted in a wrongful way.

A complaint is distinct from an inquiry, feedback, or a suggestion.

To launch a formal complaint, the Complainant must submit his/her concerns in writing and identify him or herself. UWTYR will not respond to verbal or anonymous complaints, however accommodations will be made for individuals with disabilities.

REVIEW PROCESS

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Once a formal complaint is received in writing, UWTYR is committed to handling the complaint promptly, consistently, and fairly. The Complainant will be treated with respect and be kept informed of the status of the complaint, the investigative steps being followed, and expected timelines for resolution.

Upon completion of the investigation, the Complainant will be provided with clear reasons for the decisions relating to the complaint. If the Complainant is dissatisfied with the outcome, he or she may appeal the decision and have the matter escalated to the President & Chief Executive Officer (CEO) or the UWTYR Board of Trustees. All decisions made through the appeal process are considered final.

To ensure transparency in the way complaints are being handled, UWTYR will ensure that this policy is available on our website.

4 - Procedures

Complaints under other UWTYR Policies

UWTYR has other policies that may have procedures to address questions, concerns, or complaints specific to those policies, including procedures required by legislation. As required, the complaint will be investigated under any processes outlined in those policies, as well as the processes outlined in this general Complaints Policy for Members of the Public, which is meant to ensure a consistent and fair investigation of complaints about UWTYR.

The exception to this is complaints from Members of the Public about UWTYR funded agencies. Funded agencies of UWTYR are distinct and separate entities with independent governance and management structures. Complaints made about funded agencies will be referred to the agency or funded partner and UWTYR will follow up with them to ensure they are responding to the complainant. See UWTYR's Policy on Complaints Regarding Funded Partners.

Informal Complaint

Anyone who has a concern is encouraged to talk with the employee at UWTYR who is most connected with the situation to resolve it before it becomes a formal complaint. This informal process can be used to resolve many inquiries or matters of simple error that can be corrected to the satisfaction of the person with the concern. Departments may establish protocols and responsibilities for handling informal complaints, which the investigation can follow. If the matter is not resolved at this stage, the person can make a formal complaint to UWTYR.

REVIEW PROCESS

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Employees are encouraged to forward informal complaints of a serious nature to the Chief Operating Officer (COO), as they may be valuable to identify areas where service can be improved. Employees should consult with their Director or Vice President when in doubt.

Formal Complaint

A formal complaint should be made in writing (by mail, fax or email) providing details of the complaint and contact information of the Complainant. The complaint may be directed to the Chief Operating Officer (COO). If the individual is unable to register his/her complaint in this manner due to a disability, he/she may contact the COO to request accommodation, which will be provided appropriate to the individual's needs and circumstances.

All formal complaints received by any other employee are to be forwarded to the COO. This is to ensure that all complaints are handled consistently and fairly. The COO will delegate any complaints related to an individual employee or volunteer to the VP, Human Capital. If the complaint concerns the COO or the VP, Human Capital, the complaint should be directed to the CEO of UWTYR who will undertake or delegate the responsibilities outlined in this Complaints Procedure. If the complaint concerns the CEO, the complaint should be directed to the Chair of the Board, with copy to the VP, Human Capital. Upon receiving the complaint, the COO will log the complaint in a registry and appoint an Investigator to handle the complaint investigation.

UWTYR will respond to the Complainant within 48 hours of receiving the written complaint to confirm that the complaint has been received, and indicate expectations for how long the investigation will take if it can be reasonably assessed at that point. Once appointed, the Investigator will communicate with the Complainant to confirm details and to update on the status of the investigation.

The Investigator will be accountable to the COO or his/her delegate for the investigation and timely resolution of the complaint. The target timeframe for concluding a complaint investigation is 20 business days from the receipt of the written complaint. If this timeline cannot be met, the Complainant will be informed of the reasons and be given a revised timeframe. The Investigator will consult with others to determine the facts, and if necessary, will escalate the matter to more senior levels for assistance in evaluating the findings and recommending a resolution. Throughout the process, confidentiality will be maintained as much as possible without impinging on the investigation.

REVIEW PROCESS



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The Investigator should record the following:

- Name and position of the Investigator
- Name and contact information of the Complainant
- Log the written complaint and the date it was received
- Details of the complaint, key steps in the investigation, investigation notes, and other key documents gathered during the investigation
- Other key personnel involved, including all escalation authorities
- The findings, recommended resolution, and rationale

The Investigator will report the findings and recommendations to the COO or his/her delegate in writing. The COO is responsible for communicating the findings and resolution to the Complainant.

If the Complainant is not satisfied with the findings or the corrective action, he/she may submit a written appeal to the CEO within 10 business days of the receipt of the communication. If the CEO was involved in the complaint or the investigation, the appeal should be made to the Chair of the Board of Trustees via the VP, Human Capital.

Upon receiving the appeal, the CEO or the Chair of the Board of Trustees will review the complaint, undertake any additional investigation considered necessary and make a final determination. The decision made at this level is considered final.

The COO will report to the Board at least annually on the number and type of complaints received and the attendant resolution.

REVIEW PROCESS