



## **Procedure for Reporting complaints**

RYSE Supportive Services accepts the rights of staff and youths to make complaints and to register comments and concerns about the services received. It further accepts that they should find it easy to do so. We welcome complaints and look upon them as opportunities to learn, adapt, improve, and provide better services.

This policy is intended to ensure that complaints are dealt with properly and that all complaints or comments by youths, their relatives, the care team and staff/volunteers are taken seriously. The policy is not designed to apportion blame, to consider the possibility of negligence or to provide compensation. It is not part of the company's disciplinary policy.

RYSE believes that failure to listen to or acknowledge complaints leads to an aggravation of problems, dissatisfaction, and possible litigation. RYSE supports the idea that most complaints, if dealt with early, openly and honestly, can be sorted at a local level between just the complainant and RYSE management.

RYSE acts on the basis that, wherever possible, complaints are best dealt with on a local level between the complainant and the company's management.

Aim of the Complaints Procedure for RYSE homes is to ensure that its complaints procedure is properly and effectively implemented and that the person making the complaint feel confident that their complaints and worries are listened to and acted upon promptly and fairly.

Specifically, it aims to ensure that: 1. youths, staff, the care team and the youths relatives are aware of how to complain and that the company provides easy to use opportunities for them to register their complaints 2. A named person will be responsible for the administration of the procedure 3. Every written complaint is acknowledged within 5 days. All complaints are investigated within 14 days of being made 5. All complaints are responded to in writing within 5 days of being made 6.



Complaints are dealt with promptly, fairly and sensitively, with due regard to the upset and worry that they can cause to the complainant.

Responsibilities: The team leaders are responsible for following through with complaints for the company.



## Complaints by non-staff

### Procedure:

#### Verbal complaints

1. The company accepts that all verbal complaints, no matter how seemingly unimportant, must be taken seriously.
2. Staff who receive a verbal complaint are expected to seek to solve the problem immediately.
3. If they cannot solve the problem immediately, they should offer to get their Team Leader to deal with the problem.
4. Staff are expected to remain polite, courteous, sympathetic and professional to the complainant. They are taught that there is nothing to be gained by adopting a defensive or aggressive attitude.
5. At all times in responding to the complaint, staff are encouraged to remain calm and respectful.
6. Staff should not accept blame, make excuses or blame other staff.
7. If the complaint is being made on behalf of the youth by an advocate, it must first be verified that the person has permission to speak for the youth, especially if confidential information is involved. (It is very easy to assume that the advocate has the right or power to act for the youth when they may not). If in doubt it should be assumed that the youth's explicit permission is needed prior to discussing the complaint with the advocate.
8. After talking the problem through, the manager or member of staff dealing with the complaint will suggest a course of action to resolve the complaint. If this course of action is acceptable then the member of staff should clarify the agreement with the complainant and agree a way in which the results of the complaint will be communicated to the complainant (i.e. through another meeting or by email).
9. If the suggested plan of action is not acceptable to the complainant, then the member of staff or manager will ask the complainant to put their complaint in



writing. The complainant should be given a copy of the company's complaints procedure if they do not already have one.

10. Details of all verbal and written complaints must be recorded in the Complaints file with Human Resources.

#### Serious or written complaints

1. Preliminary steps: a) When we receive a written complaint it is passed to HR who records it in the Complaint file and sends an acknowledgment letter within 3 working days to the complainant

b) The manager also includes details of RYSE procedure for the complainant. (The complaints manager is the named person who deals with the complaint through the process) c) If necessary, further details are obtained from the complainant; if the complaint is not made by the youth but on the youth's behalf, then consent of the youth, preferably in writing, must be obtained from the complainant d) If the complaint raises potentially serious matters, advice could be sought from a legal advisor. If legal action is taken at this stage, any investigation by RYSE under the complaints procedure immediately ceases.

2. Investigation of the complaint by RYSE:

a) The complaints manager will start an investigation without delay and within 14 days should be in a position to provide a full explanation to the complainant, either in writing or by



arranging a meeting with the individuals concerned b) If the issues are too complex to complete the investigation within 14 days, the complainant will be informed of any delays. c) Where the complaint cannot be resolved between the parties, an arbitration service may be used. This service and its findings will be final to both parties. The cost of this will be borne by RYSE.

3. Meeting: a) If a meeting is arranged, the complainant will be advised that they may if they wish bring a friend or relative or a representative such as an advocate b) At the meeting a detailed explanation of the results of the investigation will be given and also an apology if it is deemed appropriate (apologizing for what has happened need not be an admission of liability) c) Such a meeting gives the company management the opportunity to show the complainant that the matter has been taken seriously and has been thoroughly investigated.

4. Follow-up action: a) After the meeting, or if the complainant does not want a meeting, a written account of the investigation will be sent to the complainant. This includes details of how to approach the Case Manager/Social worker if the complainant is not satisfied with the outcome (non staff related complaint) b) The outcomes of the investigation and the meeting are recorded in the Complaint file with HR, and any shortcomings in company procedures will be identified and acted upon c) The company management formally reviews all complaints monthly as part of its quality monitoring and improvement protocols to identify the lessons learned.

All staff receive training in dealing with and responding to verbal and written complaints. The complaints policy and procedures are included in new staff members' induction training. In order to learn from mistakes, staff meetings are used to check knowledge of complaint handling and to discuss formal complaint issues in order that all staff can share and learn from the experiences.

