



NORTHAMPTON FOOD BANK

CUSTOMER FEEDBACK
(Complaints, Compliments & Comments)

Policy and Procedure

March 2014

Introduction

Northampton Food Bank aims to delivery high quality services where the customer is at the heart of everything it does. We welcome all customer feedback and aim to deal with customers' concerns in a fair and consistent way.

We want to listen to its customers' views and value their contributions. We learn from good practice as well as any mistakes and build upon past experiences to improve the future.

We aim to have sufficient resources in place to ensure that staff are supported in delivering a timely and consistent approach to handling and responding to customer feedback.

Key Principles

A customer or others acting on their behalf has a right to:

- Complain
- Be listened to
- Have their complaint investigated and resolved as quickly as possible
- Have their concerns taken seriously

Our procedure is designed to:

- Be accessible and uncomplicated
- Promote customer satisfaction
- Identify areas where services can be improved
- Learn from good practice
- Learn from mistakes
- Implement improvements in processes and procedures

Our Policy

Northampton Food Bank promotes the right of its customers to raise a concern or make a complaint if they think something has been done incorrectly or if they feel it has been addressed poorly. Similarly customers may complain if they feel something that ought to have been done has not been done.

Information about how to make a complaint or express a compliment is easily accessible on the Food Bank website.

Customers wishing to make a complaint will be offered help with following the procedure.

Complaints will be investigated objectively, fairly and thoroughly in a positive problem-solving manner.

No service will be delayed, suspended or withdrawn because a complaint has been made.

We have a mechanisms in place to ensure that any required lessons and service improvements have been achieved following customer feedback.

What is a complaint, comment or compliment?

COMPLAINT: a complaint is an expression of dissatisfaction or disquiet with the quality of a service or with a failure to provide a previously agreed service, or with the attitude or behaviour of a member of staff.

COMMENT: a comment is a general statement about policies, practices or a service as a whole, which have an impact on everyone and not just one individual. A comment can be positive or negative in nature. Comments may question policies and practices, make suggestions for new services or for improving existing services.

COMPLIMENT: an expression of praise. It is a positive statement about a services provided by Northampton Food Bank, or about the helpfulness, attitude or approach of a member of staff.

What might be complained about?

Some examples of complaints:

- An unwelcome or disputed decision
- Concern about the quality or appropriateness of a service
- Delay in decision making or provision of services
- Delivery or non-delivery of services
- Quantity, frequency or change of a service
- Attitude or behaviour of staff
- Refusal to answer reasonable questions
- Giving misleading or unsuitable advice

Time Limit for making a Complaint

Our aim is to put things right if they go wrong as quickly as possible, therefore there is a six month time limit for making a complaint.

However, the time limit may be extended if it is still possible to consider the complaint effectively and efficiently or if there are other circumstances, which may enable resolution of the complaint.

We will take the following factors into consideration when deciding if a complaint should be accepted outside the six month time limit:

- Is it a genuine issue of vulnerability?
- If an investigation were to be conducted, what would be the benefit to the customer and what could we as an organisation learn from it?
- Is there likely to be sufficient access to information or individuals involved at the time the problem occurred to enable an effective and fair investigation to be carried out?
- Other special factors

Our Complaints, Compliments and Comments Procedure

How to give your feedback

A customer (you) can make a complaint, compliment or comment either in person or by:

- Telephone 01604 716323
- Email: foodbank@restorenorthampton.org.uk
- In writing to: Customer Feedback, Northampton Food Bank, Central Vineyard Hub, Unit G3 Nene Enterprise Centre, Freehold Street, Northampton, NN2 6EF

Complaints

Our aim is to put things right if they go wrong as quickly as possible.

All staff will deal with routine difficulties as they arise and Managers and Lead Trustees will make sure complaints are investigated objectively and fairly.

What Happens Next?

The complaints process can be explained using the following steps:

- **Recording your complaint:** the person receiving your complaint will record it. This enables us to monitor the number and type of complaints, which assists us in improving our services.
- **Acknowledging your complaint:** whenever possible your complaint will be dealt with at the first point of contact. If this is not possible your complaint will be acknowledged within **5** working days and you will be given the details of the person looking in to the matter.
- **Responding to your complaint:** the person responsible for responding to your complaint will contact you to agree the best way to deal with your particular complaint. Our aim is to give you a full response within **10** working days. If for any reason we cannot do this we will let you know when you can expect to receive a response. In any event we would endeavour to respond within 20 working days.
- **Room for error:** if we have made a mistake we will apologise and try to put things right. We will explain what actions we intend to take as a result of your complaint.
- **Your right to respond:** on receipt of a response you have up to 20 working days in which to decide whether to accept or reject the actions/ recommendations we have stated to resolve your complaint.

If you are not satisfied you should contact the person who responded to your complaint. We may then offer you the opportunity to meet with a Manager. If this matter cannot be resolved by the Manager, a Lead Trustee will discuss with you the best way forward.

How Will We Put Things Right?

If we have made a mistake we will apologise and tell you what action we will take to ensure the same situation does not arise again for you or future customers. The apology would be given by the Manager on behalf of Northampton Food Bank.

We will also report on any changes and improvements to our service as a result of customer feedback.

What happens if you are not satisfied with our response?

If you are not satisfied you should contact the Chair of Trustees. A meeting will be offered and may include the investigation. If the matter cannot be resolved to your satisfaction then we will discuss with you the best way forward.

Comments

If you wish to make a comment, either negative or positive in relation to a policy decision, practice or service, this will be recorded and your comment will be acknowledged within **5** working days. The relevant person will be notified to enable them to take any action if necessary. When we review our Policies we take into consideration any comments made about a Policy.

Compliments

If you wish to express a compliment this will be recorded and shared with our team/or member of staff it relates to. We will acknowledge compliments within **5** working days.

Record Management and Data Protection

All aspects of the Customer Feedback Procedure meet the requirements of the legislation regarding Data Protection and Freedom of Information.

Any personal information obtained in relation to a complaint is only to be used for that purpose.

Appendix 1

Customer Feedback Questionnaire

- We would be really grateful if you could spare us a few minutes to complete this questionnaire – it won't take you long!
- We will use this information to help us improve the complaints process.
- If you would prefer to talk to someone you can give us a call on **Tel: 01604 713626**
- Or you can do it by e-mail:
foodbank@restorenorthampton.org.uk

1. Did you find it easy to make a complaint?

Very Poor ☹️	Poor	Satisfactory	Good	Very Good	Excellent 😊

Comment:

2. Was it clear how your complaint was going to be dealt with?

Very Poor ☹️	Poor	Satisfactory	Good	Very Good	Excellent 😊

Comment:

3. Were you happy with the time it took to deal with your complaint?

Very Poor ☹️	Poor	Satisfactory	Good	Very Good	Excellent 😊

Comment:

4. Were you happy with the response you received?

Very Poor ☹️	Poor	Satisfactory	Good	Very Good	Excellent 😊

Comment:

5. Would you like to receive feedback about what was changed or improved following your complaint? Yes / No (please circle)

6. What could we have changed to improve the experience of making a complaint? (Please continue on a separate sheet if necessary)

Thank you for your time