

Introduction

West Hockey Ltd (the Company) is committed to providing a quality service for its members, customers, and stakeholders, working in an open and accountable way that builds trust and mutual respect. West Hockey work hard to get things right the first time but we are human and so occasionally things go wrong. If you have a complaint about the service, you have received from the Company please let us know so that we can put things right. We view complaints as an opportunity to learn, review, and improve for the future, as well as a chance to put things right for the person/people of organisation(s) that has/have made a complaint.

The Company recognises that many concerns will be raised informally and dealt with quickly. An informal approach is appropriate when it can be achieved. But if concerns cannot be satisfactorily resolved informally, then the formal complaints procedure must be followed. This procedure is to provide an open and consistent approach for handling complaints.

1. Complaint

1.1 A complaint can be made by someone from inside or from outside the Company and is an expression of dissatisfaction, whether justified or not, about any aspect of West Hockey Ltd.

1.2 The Company treat all complaints seriously. You can expect to be treated with courtesy, respect, and fairness at all times. We expect that you will also treat our volunteers dealing with your complaint with the same courtesy, respect, and fairness.

1.3 We may make use of or refer to England Hockey Policies when considering complaints, in particular the Spirit of Hockey – Code of Conduct, Discipline and Misconduct or any other relevant Policy. We may refer the complaint to England Hockey for guidance.

2. Procedure

2.1 In the first instance, if you are unable to resolve the issue informally, you **MUST** write (letter or email) to the member of the committee who dealt with you, copying in the relevant Chair of the Board, providing the person who dealt with you initially the opportunity to rectify the situation and respond within 10 working days of receipt. In your letter/email you must set out the details of your complaint, the consequences for you as a result, and the remedy you are seeking. The Board will acknowledge receipt of your complaint within 5 working days and oversee the resolution at this point.

2.2 Contact details can be found on the West Hockey Website:

[West Hockey Home Page](#)

2.3 If you make a complaint in person to a member of our committees (at an event or meeting), we will record that you have made an informal, verbal complaint. Your complaint **MUST** be followed up in writing within 3 working days. The Company member will acknowledge receipt within 5 working days thereafter. The Company will then deal with your complaint in accordance with our policy for written complaints.

3. Escalation

3.1 If you are not satisfied with the initial response to your complaint then you **MUST** email/ write to the Chair of the Board or if applicable to the relevant committee Chair (see contact details above) and ask for your complaint and the response to be reviewed. You can expect the Chair to acknowledge your request within 5 working days of receipt and a full response within 15 working days.

4. Complaints Committee

4.1 The Complaints Committee (See Appendix) should review any relevant paperwork and hold any necessary meetings with all parties to establish the facts. Once these are known, these will determine what action(s) is required.

4.2 Decisions will be made on a majority basis. If the conclusion is that misconduct or similar has occurred, the disciplinary process must be applied.

4.3 It is our aim to resolve all matters as quickly as possible. However, inevitably some issues will be more complex and therefore may require longer to be fully investigated. If a complaint is complex, requires further breakdown or referral to England Hockey for guidance, it may be necessary to extend the time limit to ensure we have all the information necessary to deal with it. Consequently, timescales given for handling and responding to complaints are indicative. If a matter requires more detailed investigation, you will receive an interim response describing what is being done to deal with the matter, and when a full reply can be expected and from whom.

4.4 During the process to establish the facts, the Complaints Committee should furnish the person having a grievance raised against them with the nature of the complaint and afford them the opportunity of providing a response either verbally or in writing, but usually at a meeting with the Complaints Committee.

4.5 Written confidential records of all complaints should be safely and confidentially kept.

4.6 Where it is established that an incident of misconduct has taken place, the Complaints Committee should notify the person having a grievance raised against them of any sanction being imposed. The notification should be made in writing, setting out the reasons for the sanction. If the member is under 18 years of age, correspondence should be addressed to the parent(s) or carer(s).

4.7 The Complaints Committee should inform the complainant of the outcome of the complaint. If an incident of misconduct has taken place the Complaints Committee must ensure that the rights of confidentiality of all involved are respected.

5. Appeals

5.1 If you or the person having a grievance raised against them is unhappy with the decision of the Complaints Committee, then you/they have the right to appeal the decision to the Appeals Committee (See Appendix). Any appeal should be made in writing within 5 days of the decision of the Complaints Committee.

5.2 The Appeals Committee has the power to confirm, set aside or change any action imposed by the Complaints Committee. Any appeal would focus on the range and comprehensiveness of the evidence. For example, evidence may have been disregarded or a person not given a full opportunity to state their case. The decision of the Appeals Committee shall be final and binding.

6. Action

6.1 The action the Company take to put matters right in response to a complaint can include any combination of the remedies set out in the list below.

6.2 The general principle the Company follows is that complainants should, as far as possible, be satisfied with the complaint procedure and its outcome which should enable all parties to move forward without discrimination, judgement, or prejudice.

6.3 The remedy applied needs to be proportionate and appropriate to the failure in service and consider what redress people seek when they complain. An apology is generally the most appropriate action, but other action may also be necessary in some circumstances.

6.4 List of actions.

6.41 Accept responsibility and a full apology, explaining what happened and/or what went wrong.

6.42 Remedial action, which may include reviewing or changing a decision on the service given to an individual complainant.

6.43 Provide the service required in the first instance (immediately, if appropriate).

6.44 Putting things right (for example a change of procedure to prevent future difficulties of a similar kind, either for the complainant or others).

6.45 Training or supervising volunteers / staff; or a combination of both.

6.46 Or any other action that may resolve the matter.

6.5 The Company is committed to equal opportunities, and our aim is to make our complaints policy easy to use and accessible to all of our members, customers, and stakeholders. We will take reasonable steps to accommodate any reasonable adjustments you may have to enable you to access this policy or receive responses to complaints in other formats and provide such assistance as you may reasonably require.

6.6 All complaints about our service and requests for review under our complaints procedure should be sent as follows:

6.61 By email: Chair of the Board or relevant Committee Chair

6.62 If you are unable to contact us in writing as above, and require a reasonable adjustment because of your circumstances, you may contact us as follows:
Telephone: **01672 515789**

7. Confidentiality

7.1 Except in exceptional circumstances, every attempt will be made to ensure that both the Company and the complainant maintain confidentiality. However the circumstances giving rise to the complaint may be such that it may not be possible to maintain confidentiality (with each complaint judged on its own merit). Should this be the case, the situation will be explained to the complainant.

7.2 Any complaint or allegation concerning the Welfare of Young People must be reported to the West Hockey Welfare Officer immediately and if deemed necessary may be escalated to England Hockey. Safeguarding procedures always take precedence.

8. Monitoring & Reporting

8.1 The Company will record and monitor complaints and their resolution to maintain our commitment to continuous improvement.

Appendix

1. Complaints Committee

Chair:

- West Governance Director (or relevant committee Chair)

Members:

- A member of the Board of Directors
- One other Company Officer

2. Appeals Committee

Chair:

- Chair of the Board or another Director if relevant (not involved in the original hearing)

Members:

- Two other Company Directors or Officers (not involved in the original hearing)

*If there are insufficient officers available to join the Appeals Committee, the Company could co-opt a panel member from another Area. This panel member must be neutral, have no relationship or understanding of the original case decision.