

# Complaints Procedure

## Retirement Security Courts

It is our intention that Owners and customers should receive the best possible service from all Courts and their compliments, comments and suggestions are always welcome. All forms of feedback, positive or negative, are treated seriously, reviewed and used to promote continuous improvement in our services.

If an Owner or their representative complains about something we have done or failed to do, we will address this and respond appropriately. We will not treat anyone who makes a complaint any differently because they have done so.

We hope that in most cases the problem or complaint can be resolved directly with the member of staff providing the service. If the Owner is not satisfied that the matter has been resolved, he/she can take things further by using the **Complaints Procedure**.

## Complaints Procedure

The aim of the procedure is to protect the rights of all Owners by encouraging a fair and open resolution of individual problems. It also assists in the overall improvement of service by providing information on the quality of our performance and helps identify where improvements can be made.

We will deal with written complaints and provide an initial response in writing, as soon as possible. Where complainants tell us that they are not satisfied with our response, we will not require them to write in again in order to pursue the complaint through any escalation procedure. We will cooperate in the same way with an intermediary acting on behalf of complainants as we would with the complainants themselves.

We will provide a final decision in writing within 56 calendar days of receiving a complaint, unless we have previously agreed a later deadline.

We will advise complainants that they may refer the complaint to the relevant Ombudsman Service if they remain dissatisfied with our final decision, or we fail to provide that decision within 56 calendar days or by any other agreed later deadline.

## Stage One

This is the informal stage of the complaints procedure. It applies to complaints received verbally and/or in writing. Where a complaint is made to any member of the Court staff, that person must try to resolve the problem as quickly as possible. If unable to do this themselves, or with the support of the Duty Manager, they must report the complaint to the Court Manager immediately.

The Manager will acknowledge any complaint passed to them within 5 calendar days of receipt, contact the complainant to discuss the matter as necessary, take appropriate action to deal with the complaint, provide a written initial response within 14 calendar days of receipt of the complaint, and keep a written record of the complaint and action taken.

Where it is not possible to resolve the complaint within 14 calendar days, the Manager will contact the complainant to explain why and agree a new deadline for the stage one response.

If the complainant or their representative is not happy with the stage one response we will automatically escalate the complaint to stage two.

All complaints, informal or formal, made at any stage, must be recorded in the Complaints Register.

## Stage Two

If the complainant or their representative is not happy with the stage one response we will automatically escalate the complaint to stage two. At stage two we will refer the complaint to:

### Company Secretary

Retirement Security Limited  
18 Wood Street  
Stratford upon Avon  
CV37 6JF

We will not require complainants to write in again at this stage but they may do so if they wish. The **Company Secretary** will provide a further response in writing within 14 calendar days. If this is not possible, the **Company Secretary** will contact the complainant to explain why and agree a new deadline for the stage two response.

Those unable to put their complaints in writing will receive assistance from the Manager or Services Manager to do this. In such circumstances staff will allow the complainant the

opportunity to comment on what has been recorded, and obtain their formal agreement that what is written is an accurate statement of what they wish to say.



### Stage Three (Review Stage)

If the complainant or their representative is unhappy with the stage two response we will automatically escalate the complaint to stage three. We will not require complainants to write in again at this stage but they may do so if they wish.

The complaint will be reviewed by a complaints review panel. In all cases a meeting will be sought with the complainant to clarify the points at issue but it will not be necessary for the complainant to meet the panel if they do not wish to.

The panel will be convened as soon as possible following a request for a stage three review. If this will mean exceeding the 56-day deadline for a response, the complainant will be asked to agree an appropriate extension of that deadline. Complainants will be advised of the name and status of all panel members. If the complainant wishes to attend in person, RSL will seek to ensure the specific language needs of the complainant are catered for at the meeting. Complainants will also be advised that they have the right to be accompanied by another person, who may act as their advocate at the meeting.

The panel will decide on its recommendations and the reasons for these within 24 hours of the meeting, and within seven calendar days make these known in writing to:

- i. the complainant
- ii. Company Secretary

Within a further seven calendar days of the meeting the Chairman of RSL (or nominee) will respond to the complainant and any other interested parties with a final decision letter, outlining the Panel's decision and any further action that is to be taken within a stated timescale. This letter will mark the formal conclusion of the complaints process, after which the complainant will be free to pursue the matter, if they remain dissatisfied with the outcome, with the relevant Ombudsman.

### Further action

If the complainant or their representative is unhappy with our final decision, or we fail to provide this by the relevant deadline, the complainant may refer the complaint to the relevant Ombudsman Service. We will co-operate fully with the Ombudsman Service during any investigation and comply fully with the resulting decision, which will be binding on us:

**Housing Ombudsman Service:** PO Box 152, Liverpool L33 7WQ

**Telephone:** 0300 111 3000 (Monday to Friday 09:15 to 17:15)

**Fax:** 020 7831 1942

**Email:** [info@housing-ombudsman.org.uk](mailto:info@housing-ombudsman.org.uk)

**Web:** [www.housing-ombudsman.org.uk](http://www.housing-ombudsman.org.uk)



### **For Care issues:**

Local Government Ombudsman (LGO)

Tel: 0300 061 0614

Web: [www.lgo.org.uk](http://www.lgo.org.uk)

While the CQC welcomes information on complaints it does not normally investigate them or offer redress it just uses them to inform its future inspection programme. The following organisations may also be contacted for more information, however they do not provide the same service as the Local Government Ombudsman.

### **Citizens Advice Bureau:**

Contact your local CAB, or seek advice online at [www.adviceguide.org.uk](http://www.adviceguide.org.uk)

### **Age Concern's Housing Advice, Information and Mediation Service:**

AIMS

Age UK England

Astral House

1268 London Road

London SW16 4ER

**Telephone:** 0845 600 2001 (lo-call helpline, open 9.30am-4.30pm Mon-Fri)

### **The Leasehold Advisory Service:**

LEASE

31 Worship Street

London EC2A 2DX

**Telephone:** 020 7374 5380

**Fax:** 020 7374 5373

**Email:** [info@lease-advice.org](mailto:info@lease-advice.org)

### **Association of Retirement Housing Managers**

Southbank House

Black Prince Road

London SE1 7SJ

**Telephone:** 020 7463 0660

**Email:** [enquiries@arhm.org](mailto:enquiries@arhm.org)

### **CQC Northwest**

Citygate

Gallowgate

Newcastle upon Tyne NE1 4PA

**Email:** [enquiries.northwest@cqc.org.uk](mailto:enquiries.northwest@cqc.org.uk)

**Telephone:** 03000 616161



## Comments, Compliments and Complaints Form

We are always interested to hear your comments about services and any ideas you have for improvements, and if you are pleased with the service you are provided with we would also like to hear from you.

We are required to provide clear procedures in order to ensure that anyone who wishes to complain is dealt with fairly, quickly and confidentially. Therefore, if you are unhappy with the services provided by the Court or Retirement Security Ltd. it is important that you tell us.

In the first instance please contact the people immediately concerned. This form should be completed only if you wish to register a comment, compliment or a complaint.

Please Note: personal information given on this form will be used to monitor the quality of our service. It is collected and processed in compliance with the principles of the Data Protection Act 1998 and you have rights in respect of this information. (Please see our Data Protection Policy)

When completing the form below please give as much information as possible.



Name:	
Address:	
Details of comment, compliment or complaint (please include dates, times, names of individuals concerned), continue on a separate piece of paper if necessary:	
Has your comment, compliment or complaint previously been reported and if so when and to whom?	
Signature:	Date:

Office use only	
Received by:	Date:
Acknowledgement sent:	Date:
Recorded in Complaints Register?	Date:

