



What complaints are covered by this procedure?

Complaints may come from any person or organisation who has a legitimate interest in Family Fund Group.

This procedure relates to complaints received regarding the way in which Family Fund Group conducts its activities in providing families with help, support and assistance including but not restricted to the way in which we handle applications.

Please note if your complaint is about the goods or services provided by one of our third party suppliers before you complain to us we would expect that you would have raised the matter with the supplier directly first to give them a chance to address your complaint and remedy the situation. If the supplier then fails to resolve your complaint satisfactorily you may then complain to us as set out in this procedure.

Complaints should not be confused with disagreements about decisions made on a grant application these are covered in the appeals sections of this policy.

This procedure also does not relate to complaints made in respect of the following activities which have their own specific procedures:

- Fundraising activities – complaints received in this area will be addressed using our Fundraising Complaints Procedure.
- Complaints from Staff – this procedure is set out in the Family Fund Group's Discipline and Grievance policies.

What if you are making an Appeal?

If you disagree with a decision that we have made this procedure will tell you how to contact us asking for our decision to be looked at again.

In all circumstances we will ask you to write to us giving reasons why you disagree with our decision and also ask that you provide any additional information that supports your appeal.

Please note if our original decision relates to factual information, for example income or residency, the request will not be dealt with as an appeal, but as a request for discretionary help.

Principles of Family Fund's complaints and appeals procedure

Family Fund recognises that complaints and appeals are important feedback. We are committed to ensuring that services are of the highest quality. The complaints and appeals procedure enables us to respond clearly and properly and to know when and why people are not satisfied with its services, so that it can improve them.

Complaints and appeals must be made within two months of the date of the incident.

Complaints and appeals will be dealt with in confidence. The only exception to this is when others could be put at risk by matters referred to in the complaint or appeal.

When we receive a complaint or an appeal we will always:

- handle it fairly and politely
- look into it fully
- communicate our process and take the necessary action learn from it.

How to complain to us or ask for a review of decisions we have made

You may send your complaint or appeal to us in any of the following ways:

- **Online:** Complete our Feedback form in the '**Contact Us**' section of the website www.familyfund.org.uk.
- **Write to:**
 - Grants Services - Complaints and Appeals
 - Family Fund
 - 4 Alpha Court
 - Monks Cross Drive
 - Huntington
 - York
 - YO32 9WN
- **Email:** info@familyfund.org.uk using the subject 'Complaint'.

Stage 1: Our response

We will acknowledge receipt of a complaint or appeal within two working days of receiving it.

We will give a full reply within 28 working days of receiving a complaint or appeal.

Achieving a full resolution may take longer, in which case we will communicate the following:

- why a full resolution will take longer
- what we are doing to achieve a resolution
- when we expect the matter to be resolved.

If the complaint relates to a supplier we will investigate your complaint with that supplier and liaise with them to try to resolve any issues. We will keep you updated with our progress.

Stage 2: Escalation

If for any reason we have not resolved the complaint or appeal to your satisfaction, please bring the matter to our attention by writing to 'Grant Services Department – Complaints and Appeals' at the above address (4 Alpha Court, Monks Cross Drive, Huntington, York, YO32 9WN).

Please explain clearly why you feel that your complaint or appeal has not been properly resolved and what it is that you want us to do. A senior member of staff will then undertake a further review.

The same principles and response times will apply as above.

Stage 3: Further Escalation

If you are still not satisfied with our response, bring the matter to our attention by writing to our 'Grant Services Department – Complaints and Appeals' at the above address (4 Alpha Court, Monks Cross Drive, Huntington, York, YO32 9WN).

A senior member of staff, at Director level or higher, will fully consider the complaint or appeal and carry out an investigation. We will write to you with the results of the investigation within 28 working days.

This is the final stage of the complaint or appeal process.

Taking your complaint outside Family Fund

If your complaint relates to our supplier and we have been unable to resolve the complaint, you may wish to take your complaint to the Citizens Advice Bureau who will be able to advise you of your rights under the Consumer Rights Act 2015.

For any other complaints you can contact the Charity Commission at any stage.

Information about the kind of complaints the Commission can involve itself in can be found on their website at: www.charitycommission.gov.uk/publications/cc47.aspx.

In the case of an appeal, Family Fund has absolute discretion in how it helps families with goods and services, support and assistance so once the appeal process is finished and the decision communicated as set out above there will be not further opportunity to appeal the decision.

Recording complaints and appeals

Details recorded of every complaint and appeal include the following:

- Date of complaint or appeal;
- Nature of the complaint or appeal and the circumstances;
- If necessary, the Name of the supplier who is the subject of the complaint;
- If necessary, the product or the services which are subject of the complaint; and
- Our responses to your complaint or appeal.

Where a complaint or appeal relates to a specific family application or grant, this information will be recorded on their file in line with Family Fund data protection policies.

Persistent complaints and appeals: We reserve the right to refuse to deal with complaints and appeals that are pursued in an unreasonable way.

Confidentiality

All complaint and appeal information will be handled sensitively, telling only those who need to know and following any relevant data protection requirements. This does not include circumstances where others could be put at risk by matters referred to in your complaint or appeal in which case we would not be able to guarantee dealing with the complaint in confidence.

Information regarding a family's current or previous applications or grants can only be shared with third parties with written consent from the family themselves.

This policy was last updated in August 2018