

Step To Shelter Merseyside CIC Complaints Policy

Date Reviewed: Friday 24th October 2025

1. Policy Statement

Step To Shelter Merseyside CIC is committed to providing high-quality services and maintaining a culture of openness, honesty, and accountability. We recognise that, from time to time, individuals may wish to raise concerns or complaints about our services, staff, or practices. We take all complaints seriously and aim to resolve them promptly, fairly, and respectfully.

2. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to:

- Provide a clear and accessible process for making complaints
- Ensure complaints are handled consistently and fairly
- Promote a culture of learning and continuous improvement
- Protect the rights and dignity of all parties involved

3. Scope

This policy applies to:

- Service users
- Members of the public
- Staff and volunteers
- Partner organisations and stakeholders

Complaints may relate to:

- The quality or delivery of services
- The behaviour or conduct of staff or volunteers
- Breaches of policy or procedure
- Health and safety or safeguarding concerns
- Any other matter that causes dissatisfaction

4. Principles

- All complaints will be treated seriously and confidentially
- Complainants will be treated with respect and without discrimination
- Complaints will be investigated promptly and thoroughly
- We will aim to resolve complaints informally where possible
- Learning from complaints will be used to improve our services

5. How to Make a Complaint

Complaints can be made:

- In person
- By phone
- In writing (letter or email)
- Through a representative or advocate

Contact details:

Step To Shelter Merseyside CIC

3 Brook Road, Walton, L9 2BE

Email: Complaints@Steptoshelter.co.uk

Phone: 0151 332 5231

If the complaint is about a safeguarding issue, it will be handled in line with our Safeguarding Policy.

6. Complaints Procedure

Stage 1 – Informal Resolution

Where appropriate, we encourage individuals to raise concerns informally with a staff member or manager. Many issues can be resolved quickly without the need for a formal process.

Stage 2 – Formal Complaint

If the issue is not resolved informally or is more serious in nature, a formal complaint should be submitted in writing.

- The complaint will be acknowledged within 5 working days
- A designated manager will investigate the complaint
- A written response will be provided within 15 working days
- If more time is needed, the complainant will be informed

Stage 3 – Appeal

If the complainant is not satisfied with the outcome, they may appeal in writing within 10 working days of receiving the response.

- The appeal will be reviewed by a senior manager or trustee
- A final decision will be communicated within 15 working days
- This decision will be final

7. Confidentiality

All complaints will be handled in accordance with our Data Protection Policy. Information will only be shared with those directly involved in investigating or resolving the complaint.

8. Monitoring and Learning

We will keep a record of all complaints and use this information to:

- **Identify trends or recurring issues**
- **Improve our services and practices**
- **Report anonymised data to the Board of Directors**

9. Unreasonable or Vexatious Complaints

We reserve the right to take appropriate action where complaints are found to be malicious, repetitive without new evidence, or abusive. This will be handled with care and in line with our organisational values.

10. Review

This policy will be reviewed annually or sooner if required by changes in legislation or organisational needs.

Approval and Review

Approved by: Dylan Williams

Position: Head of Service

Date Approved: Friday 24th October 2025