

Complaints Policy

Review Date: February 2025

1. Our policy is:

- To provide a fair complaints procedure which is clear and easy to use for anyone wishing to make a complaint
- To publicise the existence of our complaints procedure so that people know how to contact us to make a complaint
- To follow the RPLC Safeguarding Policy for any complaint that includes concerns around safeguarding
- To make sure that all complaints are investigated fairly and in a timely way
- To make sure that complaints are, wherever possible, resolved and that relationships are repaired.
- To gather information which helps us to learn and improve what we do

This policy does not cover complaints from staff, who should refer to RPLC's Employee Handbook.

2. Submitting a complaint

We set ourselves high standards in how we operate, but if you feel that we have not met your expectations and wish to make a complaint, please submit it in writing to: administrator@rplc.org.uk

Or by mail to: Richmond Parish Lands Charity, The Vestry House, 21 Paradise Street, Richmond, TW9 1SA.

Please provide your full name, organisation name (if applicable) and contact details. All complaints will be investigated but it may not be possible to proceed if the complainant does not identify themselves. Please also provide as much background as possible for us to understand your position fully and to help us respond. If we can provide additional support to assist you to make the complaint process easier (for example, large print documents or emails), please advise us when making the complaint and we will do our best to support you with this.

3. Receiving complaints

Complaints received by telephone or in person will be encouraged, where possible, to send in their complaint in writing. The person who receives a complaint via a phone call or in person should:

- Write down the facts of the complaint as soon as possible after the event
- Take the complainant's name, email address and telephone number
- Note down the relationship of the complainant to RPLC
- If the complaint is from an RPLC tenant (charitable or investment properties) refer them to RPLC's Property Manager (Jackson-Stops) [Customer Complaints Procedure](#) in the first instance
- Tell the complainant that we have a complaints procedure
- Tell the complainant what will happen next and how long it will take
- Where possible/appropriate, ask the complainant to send a written account by post or by email so that the complaint is recorded in the complainant's own words.

4. Confidentiality

All complaints will be handled sensitively by our Chief Executive and Senior Leadership Team (Finance & HR Director, Grants Director, Property Director), sharing information only with those who need to know and following relevant data protection requirements. Depending on who is concerned and what is appropriate, trustees as well as staff can be involved.

5. Resolving complaints

Stage One

We will acknowledge receipt of your complaint and share it with our Senior Leadership Team within one week.

We will let you know who is dealing with the complaint and when you can expect a response. Where possible, a complaint will be resolved directly with the person responsible for the issue being complained about.

We expect to provide a definitive response within four weeks. If this is not possible because, for example, an investigation has not been fully completed, a progress report will be sent with an indication of when a full response will be given. Our response will set out the action taken to investigate the complaint, the conclusions from the investigation, and any action taken as a result of the complaint.

Stage Two

If you feel that your complaint has not been satisfactorily resolved at Stage One, you can request that the complaint is reviewed at a higher level. At this stage, the complaint will be passed to the Chief Executive or if the complaint is against the Chief Executive, to the Chair of Trustees. You must do this within four weeks of receiving our response to Stage One.

The Chief Executive or Chair of Trustees may investigate the facts of the case themselves or delegate a senior member of staff or another trustee to do so. This may involve reviewing the paperwork of the case, speaking with the person who dealt with the complaint at Stage One, and speaking with the person who submitted the complaint. If the complaint relates to a specific person, they will be informed and given a further opportunity to respond.

We aim to respond to Stage Two complaints within six weeks. If this is not possible because, for example, an investigation has not been fully completed, a progress report will be sent with an indication of when a full reply will be given.

Whether the complaint is upheld or not, our response will describe the action taken to investigate the complaint, the conclusions from the investigation, and any action taken as a result of the complaint. The decision taken at this stage is final.

6. Monitoring and learning from complaints

Complaints are reviewed annually by the Senior Leadership Team to identify any trends which may indicate a need to take further action. This is reported to the Trustees.