

EquiCymru

Complaints Policy

Making a complaint

- 1.1 If a customer wishes to raise a complaint against EquiCymru, they should do so by contacting the office, at Bronaeron, Felinfach, Lampeter, Ceredigion, SA48 8AG or by email on passports@equicymru.co.uk.
- 1.2 A complaint should be in writing, marked "private & confidential" and signed by the complainant.
- 1.3 If the complaint is sent by post, then it should be sent by recorded delivery. Or a delivery receipt for emailed complaints or any hand deliveries should be obtained.

Responding to a complaint: informal

- 1.4 Within 5 working days of the receipt of a complaint, a letter or email acknowledging its receipt will be sent by EquiCymru and, if necessary, asking for further details relating to the subject of the complaint.
- 1.5 Where it is considered that the complaint may be resolved by way of an informal discussion, the relevant parties will be informed of the complaint and invited to resolve their complaint in an informal setting. This may include a meeting or other facilitated discussion. In cases where informal resolution has not previously been successful, the complaint will automatically be dealt with under the formal process set out below.
- 1.6 If EquiCymru believes that the matter would be best addressed by mediation (a more structured approach to an informal meeting) it will invite the complainant and the person(s) complained of to participate in a mediation process. If an informal meeting has not achieved resolution the parties may still be invited to attend a mediation session in cases where EquiCymru determines, at its discretion, that mediation may still prove to be successful. If mediation is unsuccessful this will not be offered for a second time in respect of the same complaint.
 - The mediator will attempt to facilitate a resolution. This may involve the mediator speaking with each of the parties on further occasions following the initial discussion;
 - Where deemed appropriate all parties will ultimately be asked to meet in the same room to discuss possible resolution;
 - A summary of the discussion, agreements/outcome reached and any agreed actions will be summarised and provided to all parties, in writing, within 5 working days of the meeting.

Responding to a complaint: formal

- 1.7 In the event that informal action or mediation is not appropriate or has been attempted and not resulted in resolution, we will write to you setting out the name of the person(s) assigned to investigate the complaint (the Investigating Officer).

The Investigating Officer will be an independent person who will not have previously been involved in the matter being heard.

- 1.8 The designated individual will:
 - i) Treat every complaint as confidential
 - ii) Not discuss any matters with anyone outside of the organisation other than to request expert advice
 - iii) Declare immediately if they have a conflict of interest
 - iv) Treat each reported incident fairly and equitably.
- 1.9 If we require further information from the complainant in order to process the complaint and this can be provided in writing or in the form of other documentary evidence, this will be requested when we write to confirm the details of the Investigating Officer. Any further details/information requested by EquiCymru should be provided by the complainant within 10 working days of the date of the written request (unless otherwise agreed) otherwise the complaint may not be processed any further.
- 1.10 The investigation of the complaint will be carried out by the Investigating Officer within a reasonable timescale barring issues outside their control.
- 1.11 The Investigating Officer will undertake all reasonable investigation.
- 1.12 If necessary, the complainant may be invited to a meeting to discuss the complaint and/or the response to the complaint further. In the event that this is not possible or practical the complainant may be asked to expand upon the complaint in writing or by telephone. The format, date, time, location and attendees of any meeting/telephone call will be notified to the complainant in advance.
- 1.13 If deemed necessary, the investigation may also include obtaining a response to the complaint from any member who is the subject of the complaint. This will usually involve sharing the full details of the complaint with that member, which in normal circumstances will include the identity of the complainant.
- 1.14 If necessary, further witnesses included the subject(s) of the complaint will be invited into an investigatory meeting to discuss the matter raised. Witnesses will be given reasonable notice in advance of the format, date, time, location and attendees of any meeting/telephone call.
- 1.15 Once the investigation has been concluded, a determination will be made by the Investigating Officer who will notify the complainant and the person complained of or against in writing of the decision together with the reasons for this decision and any recommended actions. This document will also be sent to the Society who will retain a copy on file. The Investigating Officer will either:
 - (a) Dismiss the complaint in whole or in part; or
 - (b) Uphold the complaint in whole or in part