The complaint handling procedure – a guide for staff receiving complaints

**STAGE 1: FRONTLINE RESOLUTION**

**Stage 1 – Frontline Resolution**
Always try to resolve the complaint quickly and to the complainant's satisfaction wherever possible.

Provide a decision on the complaint within five working days unless there are exceptional circumstances.

Is the complainant satisfied with the decision?

- No
  - Send acknowledgement within three working days.
  - Provide the decision as soon as possible but within 20 working days, unless there is a clear reason for extending this timescale. Include information on Scottish Public Services Ombudsman.
  - Close complaint and record outcome.
  - Is the complainant satisfied with the decision and with the way we have handled the complaint?
    - No
      - Complainant contacts SPSO
    - Yes

- Yes
  - Complaint closed and outcome recorded

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**STAGE 2: COMPLAINT/INVESTIGATION**

**Stage 2 – Complaint/Investigation**
1. Investigate where the complainant is still dissatisfied after communication of decision at stage 1.
2. Investigate where it is clear that the complaint is particularly complex or will require detailed investigation.

Send acknowledgement within three working days.

Provide the decision as soon as possible but within 20 working days, unless there is a clear reason for extending this timescale. Include information on Scottish Public Services Ombudsman.

Close complaint and record outcome.

Is the complainant satisfied with the decision and with the way we have handled the complaint?

- No
- Yes

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**Monthly or quarterly**
- Ensure ALL complaints are recorded
- Report performance and analysis of outcomes to senior management
- Make changes to service delivery where appropriate
- Publicise complaints information externally
- Publicise service improvement.