**COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE**

A complaint is an expression of dissatisfaction, made either verbally or in writing, about the standard of service, actions or lack of action by House to Home staff / Approved Sub Contractor affecting an individual customer or group of customers.

**PROCEDURE**

*Responsibilities*

The Director is responsible for the coordination of the complaints policy and procedure, including the analysis of data.

The Director is responsible for overseeing the process of monitoring and reporting the progress of the complaint and any responses made.

Managers and Directors are responsible for the investigation of complaints directly related to their areas of operation.

*The System*

1st Tier Front Line General Enquire Officer



2nd Tier Office Manager



3rd Tier Director



4th Tier Independent Review Body **\***

**\*** Could include the Ombudsman, a judicial review etc

*Process for complaint handling*

Complaints should preferably be in writing addressed to the Director, complete with address.

Telephone and verbal complaints will be entered into the complaints system, but wherever possible, should be confirmed in writing.

Anonymous complaints should also be recorded and assessed and action taken where necessary.

In order to deal with complaints effectively and efficiently in order to resolve the problem, they will be dealt with in the following manner:

* Front line staff (1st Tier) will handle straightforward, minor complaints. Where these minor complaints cannot be dealt with immediately, they will be acknowledged in writing within 5 working days. The letter will detail what action will be taken, who the responsible officer will be and a contact number, and the anticipated time for a response where this is known.
* Complaints which cannot be handled by front line staff should be referred to the officer responsible for resolution ie the Actioning Officer (1st Tier), in conjunction with other supervisory staff in that work area, if required. It is expected that the Actioning Officer will acknowledge the complaint and will liaise with the complainant, in order to keep him/her informed of the progress of the action being taken.
* Any follow up complaint to an original request/complaint will progress immediately to the 2nd Tier and be handled by the Office Manager.
* Serious complaints involving inappropriate behaviour or staff (eg. rudeness, discrimination or harassment) will be directed to the Director, and if appropriate, the Human Resource Manager. As in (1), the initial acknowledgement by the responsible officer, detailing the likely action to be taken, will occur within 5 working days.
* Serious complaints involving personal injury, a breach of the law or financial implications, and complaints which involve the need for a detailed knowledge of operations and procedures, will be directed to the responsible officer/Manager in the first instance (ie 2nd Tier), followed by the The Director (3rd Tier) where necessary. Once again, the initial acknowledgement should be made within 5 working days by the responsible officer.
* Any appeal against a response from 1st Tier staff can be referred to a 2nd Tier manager, director for resolution. Any appeal against a response from 2nd Tier staff should be referred to the Director for resolution.

In cases where the customer does not accept the outcome achieved by House to Home as a result of following its complaints procedure, the complainant should be advised of alternative options open to them. These include approaching the Ombudsman, The Council.