

Complaints Policy & Procedure

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1. Commitment

TortureID believes that if an individual or organisation wishes to make a complaint or register a concern, they should find it easy to do so. TortureID welcomes complaints and views them as an opportunity to learn, adapt, and improve our service. This policy and procedure are intended to ensure that complaints are investigated in full, in a timely manner and that all complaints or comments are taken seriously.

It is important that complaints are handled fairly for everyone involved and all TortureID representatives respond in a positive and understanding manner to complaints made by service users. Making a complaint will not affect the rights or quality of service to an individual or organisation.

We welcome feedback and suggestions from our service users and complaints are an important form of feedback. We aim to find fair and reasonable solutions to complaints as quickly as possible. We record and monitor complaints and make every reasonable effort to resolve issues, demonstrating our commitment to delivering a quality service.

2. Definitions

The word 'service' is used in the broadest sense; it may refer to our services for clients or any other activities of TortureID.

Complaints are defined as an expression of dissatisfaction that the individual/organisation concerned would like to have treated as a complaint. Verbal complaints are treated as seriously as written complaints.

Any user of a TortureID service may complain; a complainant could be:

- a person using our services
- a volunteer
- a donor
- a supporter
- another professional working with any TortureID staff or volunteers or referring clients to our service

Complaints can be made about the delivery of TortureID services whether direct or indirect.

This policy is not intended for complaints about organisational policy.

3. Aims

TortureID aims to ensure that:

- making a complaint is as easy as possible
- we deal with it promptly, politely and, when appropriate, confidentially
- we respond in the right way with an explanation, or an apology where the complaint is upheld
- we learn from complaints, use them to improve our service.

Resolving any expression of dissatisfaction informally at the earliest opportunity is encouraged.

However, if concerns cannot be satisfactorily resolved informally through discussion, then the formal complaints procedure should be followed.

4. How TortureID deals with complaints

The formal complaints procedure is intended to ensure that all complaints are handled fairly, consistently and wherever possible resolved to the complainant's satisfaction.

It is TortureID's responsibility to:

- acknowledge the formal complaint in writing within 10 working days
- respond and complete the complaint investigation within 20 working days
- deal reasonably and sensitively with the complaint
- take action where appropriate e.g. amend procedures, implement training and development

A complainant's responsibility is to:

- bring their complaint, in writing, to TortureID's attention within 6 weeks of the issue arising, but TID may consider a complaint made outside this time limit if there are good reasons for the delay
- raise concerns promptly and directly with a member of staff at TortureID
- explain the problem as clearly and as fully as possible, including any action taken to date
- allow TortureID a reasonable timeframe to deal with the matter
- recognise that some circumstances may be beyond TortureID's control.

Many complaints can be resolved informally by using good communication skills. However, we also recognise that there will be times when people wish to make formal complaints.

When dealing with all complaints, informal and formal, we will:

- treat the complaint seriously – verbal complaints are treated as seriously as written complaints
- consult complainants about how they wish their complaint to be resolved
- seek to resolve complaints as effectively and quickly as possible
- thoroughly investigate the complaint
- communicate with the complainant to explain what has been done and what will be done in an effort to resolve the issue
- where appropriate, use the outcome of the complaint to improve services
- ensure that complainants are told how they can further their complaint if they are not satisfied
- record and monitor complaints, progress towards resolution of the issue and the means by which a resolution was reached

We aim to ensure that all formal complaints receive a response within 15 working days of the complaint being made.

5. Responsibility for action

The TortureID Board of Trustees is ultimately responsible for the Complaint Procedure.

6. Confidentiality

Except in exceptional circumstances, every attempt will be made to ensure that TortureID maintain confidentiality. However, the circumstances surrounding the complaint may be such that it may not be possible to maintain confidentiality. Should this be the case, the situation and reasons why will be explained to the complainant.

7. Monitoring and reporting

All complaints are logged by the Director, and any complaints made will be discussed at the next Board of Trustees meeting. Complaints are included as a standing Agenda item, and the Board will review all complaints on an annual basis to inform service improvements.

8. Dealing with direct services client complaints

We recognise that the best people to deal with client complaints initially are the staff and Director.

We recognise that clients may need to be encouraged to complain if they encounter an issue whilst using our services and that the client complaint procedure must be easily accessible.

Complaints Policy

1. Introduction

Users of TortureID are encouraged to make complaints initially by talking to the relevant member of staff/volunteer of the service. Informal complaints will be written up by the staff member hearing the complaint. If they are not satisfied with the response, they should instigate Level 1 of the formal complaints procedure by completing a Complaints Form. This is available on our website or can be requested.

All formal complaints must be submitted using the complaints form or in writing. If a client is unable to submit a complaint in writing themselves, they can ask a staff member or volunteer for help, and they will record the details of the complaint on a complaints form for them.

If a complainant is not satisfied with the response to their complaint at Level 1 of the Complaints Procedure, the complaint may then be dealt with at Level 2 of the Complaints Procedure, if it cannot be resolved otherwise. If a complainant is not satisfied with the response to their complaint at Level 2 of the Complaints Procedure, they can appeal the decision, Level 3.

2. Levels of formal complaint

The formal complaints procedure is intended to ensure that all complaints are handled fairly, consistently and wherever possible resolved to the complainant's satisfaction.

In the first instance staff members must establish the seriousness of the complaint; if the issue cannot be resolved informally, the complainant should write to TortureID, so that he or she has a chance to put things right. If the complaint concerns the Director of TortureID, rather than a member of staff, the complainant should write formally to the Chair of the Board of

Trustees. The complainant should set out the details of their complaint and the solution they are seeking. Their complaint will be acknowledged within 15 working days of receipt, and they should get a response and full explanation within 20 working days.

Level One Complaint

A complaint is received either through a staff member, or the complaints form via the website.

TortureID confirms with the complainant receipt of the complaint within 10 working days, and confirming an investigation will now take place and an initial response will be sent to the complainant within 20 working days.

The Director carries out the necessary inquiries and investigation, or a member of the Board of Trustees in their absence. If you are a client and your complaint relates to a service you have received, they will contact the staff member concerned to provide their response to your complaint.

The Director or member of the Board of Trustees will consider the staff member's response (where complainant is a client), the information provided in the complaint and any other relevant material (such as the contents of a clinical letter).

The Director or appointed member of the Board of Trustees responds to the complainant in writing within 20 working days of the complaint being made. They will send their written response to the complainant. This response will set out the findings of the complaint investigation as well as any suggestions for resolving the matter.

Level Two Complaint

All formal complaints will initially be dealt with at Level 1.

Complaints may be reconsidered at Level 2 if the complainant is not satisfied with the response at Level 1 and the complaint cannot be resolved.

If you are not satisfied with the initial response to the complaint, then you can write to TortureID's Chair of the Board of Trustees and ask for your complaint and the response to be reviewed. Your request for a review must be received by TortureID within 15 working days of you being sent the initial response to the complaint. You can expect the Chair to acknowledge your request within 15 working days of receipt and a full response within 20 working days.

If a matter requires more detailed investigation, you will receive an interim response describing what is being done to deal with the matter, and when a full reply can be expected and from whom.

Before the complaints meeting

1. TortureID convenes a formal meeting within 15 working days of Level 2 being instigated.
2. A Board member is appointed to hear the complaint and is given all the relevant documentation.
3. At this stage the complainant (if they are a client) may ask to have someone advocate on their behalf and/or request an interpreter.

At the meeting

1. The Board member invites the complainant or complainant's advocate to present the complaint. They may be asked for further details, and they will be asked to propose possible resolutions to their complaint.
2. As necessary the Board member may invite relevant members of staff or witnesses to provide information at the meeting.

After the meeting

1. The Board member informs the complainant of the outcome of the meeting in writing within 10 working days. An explanation of the decision will be given, and the complainant informed as to how they can take their complaint further if they are not satisfied.
2. The Board member completes a complaints monitoring form.

Level Three: Final Level – Appeal

If you are not satisfied with the subsequent reply from TortureID, then you can write to the Chair of the Board of Trustees, stating the reason why you are dissatisfied with the outcome. You must do this within 15 days of receiving the written response from TortureID.

The Chair of the Board of Trustees will respond normally within 15 working days to inform you of the action which will be taken to investigate your complaint, and when you can expect to hear the outcome of the investigation. Their decision will be final.

If your original complaint was against the Chair of the Board of Trustees, then the final stage will be handled by another appropriate Trustee.

3. Monitoring and recording complaints

All formal (Level 1) complaints, along with their outcomes, will be recorded by the Director using complaints monitoring forms. Written records of informal complaints will also be held by the Director.

Records will be taken of formal Complaints Meetings and Appeal Meetings and all correspondence.

4. Other procedures

In some circumstances, it may be necessary to invoke the Disciplinary or Child or Adult Protection procedures on receipt of a complaint. The Chair of the Board of Trustees, in consultation with the Director, will make that decision. In such cases the Complaints Procedure will be suspended until any other ongoing procedure has been resolved.

If you consider taking legal action against the TortureID, we confirm we have Professional Indemnity Insurance to meet any relevant claims.

5. How to make a complaint

First steps

TortureID welcomes complaints and view them as an opportunity to learn, adapt, and improve service delivery. If you would like to complain about the standard of service or care you have received from TortureID, we need you to inform us so we can try to resolve any problems, and so that we can improve our service.

TortureID will always try to provide you with an opportunity to tell us of your concerns and will work with you to try to resolve them. If you are not satisfied with any aspect of our services or your experience as a volunteer, you may initially want to discuss this with the Lead Doctor, Director or a member of the Board of Trustees to see if the matter can be resolved quickly.

If you are making a complaint, please give us as much detail as you can. The key information we need from you to understand and investigate your complaint:

- The time and date when the problem occurred.
- The name or roles of those involved.
- The location where this issue occurred.

You can make your complaint either verbally or in writing by:

- a) completing our online complaints form on the website
- b) contact the Director by phone or in person
- c) Writing to:

TortureID
19 Church Avenue
Meanwood
Leeds
LS6 4JX

Please note that making a complaint will have no impact on the way we will treat you in the future.

What happens next?

When we receive your complaint, we will let you know that we've received it within 15 working days.

We will then investigate your complaint and will write to you about the outcome within 20 working days of receiving your complaint. If we must change the timescale for us to respond to your complaint for any reason, we will let you know and explain why.

If you are not satisfied with our response to your complaint, we will provide you with information on what further steps you can take. We will keep your complaint confidential, unless there are exceptional circumstances.

TortureID will keep details of your complaint in a central register.