

COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

Verbal Complaints

- All verbal complaints, no matter how seemingly unimportant, will be taken seriously. Nothing is gained by staff adopting a defensive or aggressive attitude.
- Front line staff who receive a verbal complaint will seek to solve the problem immediately if possible.
- If staff cannot solve the problem immediately they will offer to get management to deal with the problem.
- All contact with the complainant will be polite, courteous and sympathetic.
- At all times staff will remain calm and respectful.
- Staff will not accept blame, make excuses or blame other staff.
- If the complaint is being made on behalf of the service user by an advocate it will first be verified that the person has permission to speak for the service user, especially if confidential information is involved. It will not be assumed that the advocate has the right or power to act for the service user when they may not. If in doubt it will be assumed that the service user's explicit permission is needed prior to discussing the complaint with the advocate.
- After talking the problem through, each manager or the member of staff dealing with the complaint will suggest a course of action to resolve the complaint. If this course of action is acceptable then the member of staff will clarify the agreement with the complainant and agree a way in which the results of the complaint will be communicated to the complainant (i.e. through another meeting or by letter).
- If the suggested plan of action is not acceptable to the complainant then the member of staff or manager will ask the complainant to put their complaint in writing to Videonations and give them a copy of the complaints procedure and form for completion.
- In both cases details of the complaints will be recorded on a complaints form and handed to the Manager.

Written Complaints

- When a complaint is received in writing it will be passed on to the named complaints manager who will record it in the complaints book and send an acknowledgment letter within two working days. The complaints manager will be the named person who deals with the complaint through the process.
- If necessary, further details should be obtained from the complainant. If the complaint is not made by the service user but on the service user's behalf, then consent of the service user, preferably in writing, will be obtained from the complainant.
- Information detailing the procedure will be forwarded to the complainant.
- If the complaint raises potentially serious matters, advice will be sought from a legal advisor to Videonations. If legal action is taken at this stage any investigation by Videonations under the complaints procedure will cease immediately.
- If the complainant is not prepared to have the investigation conducted by the establishment he or she will be advised to seek legal action.

- Immediately on receipt of the complaint the Videonations will launch an investigation and within 28 days should be in a position to provide a full explanation to the complainant, either in writing or by arranging a meeting with the individuals concerned.
- If the issues are too complex to complete the investigation within 28 days, the complainant will be informed of any delays.
- If a meeting is arranged the complainant will be advised that they may, if they wish, bring a friend or relative or a representative such as an advocate.
- At the meeting a detailed explanation of the results of the investigation will be given and also an apology if it is deemed appropriate (apologising for what has happened is not an admission of liability).
- Such a meeting gives Videonations the opportunity to show the complainant that the matter has been taken seriously and has been thoroughly investigated.
- After the meeting, or if the complainant does not want a meeting, a written account of the investigation will be sent to the complainant.
- The outcomes of the investigation and the meeting will be recorded on appropriate documentation and any shortcomings in Videonations procedures will be identified and acted upon.
- Videonations will discuss complaints and their outcome at a formal business meeting and the complaints procedure will be audited by the manager every six months.

Training

All staff will be trained in dealing with, and responding to, complaints. Complaints policy training will be included in the induction training for all new staff and in-house training sessions on handling complaints will be conducted at least annually and all relevant staff will attend.