



Second Chance Housing

Complaints Policy

Version: 2.0

Effective Date: 1 April 2025

Next Review Date: 1 April 2026

Updated by: Asif Mughal

1. Introduction and Purpose

Second Chance Housing Ltd is committed to providing high-quality supported housing services to our residents. We recognise that sometimes things go wrong, and when they do, we want to hear about it so we can put things right and learn from the experience.

This policy sets out how we handle complaints in accordance with the Housing Ombudsman's Complaint Handling Code 2024 (the Code), which became statutory on 1 April 2024.

2. Definition of a Complaint

A complaint is defined as:

"An expression of dissatisfaction, however made, about the standard of service, actions or lack of action by the landlord, its own staff, or those acting on its behalf, affecting a resident or group of residents."

A resident does not have to use the word "complaint" for it to be treated as such.

Whenever a resident expresses dissatisfaction, we will give them the choice to make a complaint.

2.1 Service Requests vs Complaints

A service request is a request from a resident requiring action to be taken to put something right. Service requests are not complaints but are recorded, monitored, and reviewed regularly.

A complaint must be raised when a resident expresses dissatisfaction with the response to their service request, even if the handling of the service request remains ongoing.

3. Exclusions

We will accept all complaints unless there is a valid reason not to do so. We will consider each complaint on its own merits and will not take a blanket approach to exclusions.

Acceptable exclusions include:

- The issue giving rise to the complaint occurred over 12 months ago
- Legal proceedings have started (Claim Form and Particulars of Claim filed at court)
- Matters that have previously been considered under this complaints policy

If we decide not to accept a complaint, we will provide a written explanation setting out the reasons and inform the resident of their right to take the decision to the Housing Ombudsman.

4. Accessibility and Awareness

Residents can make a complaint through any of the following channels:

- In writing to: Second Chance Housing Ltd, Swan Buildings, First Floor, 20 Swan Street, Manchester, M4 5JW
- By email to: smt@secondchancehousingha.co.uk
- By telephone: 01706 536589
- In person to any member of staff
- Via a third party or representative

All staff are aware of this complaints process and can pass details of a complaint to the appropriate person. We consider our duties under the Equality Act 2010 and will make reasonable adjustments for residents who need to access the complaints process.

5. The Complaints Procedure

We operate a two-stage complaints procedure. There are no informal or preliminary stages.

5.1 Stage 1

Acknowledgement: Within 5 working days of receiving your complaint, we will:

- Acknowledge your complaint in writing
- Log the complaint
- Set out our understanding of the complaint
- Confirm the outcomes you are seeking

Response: Within 10 working days of acknowledgement, we will provide a full response including:

- The complaint stage
- The complaint definition
- Our decision on the complaint
- The reasons for our decision
- Details of any remedy offered
- Details of any outstanding actions
- How to escalate to Stage 2 if dissatisfied

If we need more time (up to an additional 10 working days), we will explain why and provide contact details for the Housing Ombudsman.

5.2 Stage 2

If you remain dissatisfied after Stage 1, you can request that your complaint be escalated to Stage 2. You do not need to explain your reasons for requesting this.

Within 5 working days, we will acknowledge your escalation request.

Within 20 working days of acknowledgement, a different person from Stage 1 will review your complaint and provide our final response, including:

- The complaint stage
- The complaint definition
- Our final decision
- The reasons for our decision
- Details of any remedy offered
- Details of any outstanding actions
- How to escalate to the Housing Ombudsman Service

If we need more time (up to an additional 20 working days), we will explain why and provide contact details for the Housing Ombudsman.

6. Putting Things Right

Where something has gone wrong, we will acknowledge this and take action to put things right. Remedies may include:

- An apology
- An explanation or reasons
- Taking action if there has been delay
- Reconsidering or changing a decision
- Amending records
- Financial compensation

- Changing policies or procedures

Any remedy offered will reflect the impact on the resident and we will take account of the Housing Ombudsman's remedies guidance.

7. The Housing Ombudsman Service

If you remain dissatisfied after completing our complaints procedure, you can refer your complaint to the Housing Ombudsman Service at any time.

Housing Ombudsman Service

PO Box 1484

Unit D, Preston, PR2 0ET

Telephone: 0300 111 3000

Email: info@housing-ombudsman.org.uk

Website: www.housing-ombudsman.org.uk

8. Governance and Oversight

Complaints Officer: Asif Mughal

The Complaints Officer has responsibility for complaint handling, liaison with the Housing Ombudsman, and ensuring complaints are reported to the governing body.

Member Responsible for Complaints (MRC): Asif Mughal

The MRC ensures the governing body receives regular information on complaints and has oversight of complaint handling performance.

9. Unacceptable Behaviour

We have policies for managing unacceptable behaviour from residents or their representatives. Any restrictions on contact will be proportionate, evidenced, regularly reviewed, and have regard for the Equality Act 2010.

10. Policy Review

This policy will be reviewed annually or following any significant changes to the Housing Ombudsman's Complaint Handling Code.