



*Making a dent in the 95%
Positively changing lives*

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Complaints Policy & Procedures

BEC believe that if a customer, colleague, affiliate or joint venture partner wishes to make a complaint or register a concern they should find it easy to do so. BEC's policy is to welcome complaints and look upon them as an opportunity to learn, adapt, improve and provide a better service. This policy is intended to ensure that complaints are dealt with properly and that all complaints or comments by customers, colleagues, affiliates or joint venture partners are taken seriously.

The policy is not designed to apportion blame, to consider the possibility of negligence or to provide compensation. It is NOT part of this establishment's disciplinary policy.

We at BEC believe that failure to listen to or acknowledge complaints will lead to an aggravation of problems, customer dissatisfaction and possible litigation. BEC supports the concept that most complaints, if dealt with early, openly and honestly, can be sorted out at between just the complainant and BEC. If this fails due to either BEC or the complainant being dissatisfied, currently your only solution is to raise a complaint with the Citizens Advice Bureau - local branches in every UK town.

Aim

The aim of BEC is to ensure that its complaints procedure is properly and effectively implemented, and that complainants feel confident that their complaints and worries are listened to and acted upon promptly and fairly.

Goals

- Customers and their representatives are aware of how to complain, and that BEC provides easy to use opportunities for them to register their complaints
- A named person will be responsible for the administration of the procedure.
- Every written complaint is acknowledged within two working days
- Investigations into written complaints are held within 28 days
- All complaints are responded to in writing by BEC
- Complaints are dealt with promptly, fairly and sensitively with due regard to the upset and worry that they can cause to both BEC and their customers.. The named manager, with responsibility for dealing with complaints, is Chris Richards.

Complaints Procedure

Oral Complaints

- All oral complaints, no matter how seemingly unimportant, should be taken seriously. There is nothing to be gained by staff adopting a defensive or aggressive attitude. • BEC employees who receive an oral complaint should seek to solve the problem immediately if possible.
- If staff cannot solve the problem immediately they should offer to refer the matter to the complaints manager to deal with the problem.
- All contact with the complainant should be polite, courteous and sympathetic.
- At all times staff should remain calm and respectful.
- BEC Employees should not accept blame, make excuses or blame other employees.
- If the complaint is being made on behalf of the customer by an advocate it must first be verified that the person has permission to speak for the customer, especially if confidential information is involved. It is very easy to assume that the advocate has the right or power to act for the customer when they may not. If in doubt it should be assumed that the customer'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 should suggest a course of action to resolve the complaint. If this course of action is acceptable then the member of staff should clarify the agreement with the complainant and agree a way in which the results of the complaint will be communicated to the complainant (ie 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 should ask the complainant to put their complaint in writing to the BEC and give them a copy of the complaints procedure and form for completion.
- In both cases details of the complaint should be recorded on a complaint form.

Written Complaints

- When a complaint is received in writing it should be passed on to the named complaints manager who should 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. (Chris Richards).
- If necessary, further details should be obtained from the complainant. If the complaint is not made by the customer but on the customer's behalf, then consent of the customer, preferably in writing, must be obtained from the customer.
- A copy of the complaint's procedure will be given to the customer.
- If the complaint raises potentially serious matters, advice should be sought from a legal advisor. If legal action is taken at this stage any investigation by BEC under the complaints procedure should cease immediately.
- Where we cannot resolve any complaints using our own complaints procedure,
- If the issues are too complex to complete the investigation within 28 days, the complainant should be informed of any delays.
- If a meeting is arranged the complainant should 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 should be given and also an apology if it is deemed appropriate (apologising for what has happened need not be an admission of liability).
- Such a meeting gives BEC 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 should be sent to the complainant. This should include details of how to approach Which? Trusted Trader if the complainant is not satisfied with the outcome.
- The outcomes of the investigation and the meeting should be recorded on appropriate documentation and any shortcomings in BEC's procedures should be identified and acted upon.
- BEC's complaints procedure should be audited by the manager every six months.