

IPA Group Benevolent Fund Complaints procedure

OVERVIEW

The IPA Group Benevolent fund views complaints as an opportunity to learn and improve for the future, as well as a chance to put things right for the person or organisation that has made the complaint. Our policy is:

- to provide a fair complaints procedure which is clear and easy to use for anyone wishing to make a complaint;
- to make, via our website, the existence of our complaint's procedure known so that people know how to contact us to make a complaint;
- to make sure everyone at the Charity knows what to do if a complaint is received;
- to make sure all complaints are investigated fairly and in a timely way;
- to make sure that complaints are, wherever possible, resolved and that relationships are repaired
- to gather information which helps us to improve what we do.

2. DEFINITION OF A COMPLAINT

2.1 An complaint is any expression of dissatisfaction about any aspect of the working of the Charity as defined by the constitution and within the responsibilities of the Trustees.

2.2 Complaints may come from any individual or organisation who we contact about our work, or any other person or organisation with an interest in the Charity and its activities.

2.3 A complaint should be submitted by e-mail to info@ifa-ipa-benevolentfund.com or by letter to Charity Manager, IFA/IPA Group Benevolent Fund, Unite House, 2 Albert Place. London/ N31QB

3. CONFIDENTIALITY

All complaint information will be handled sensitively, telling only those who need to know and following any relevant data protection requirements.

4. RESPONSIBILITY

Overall responsibility for this policy and its implementation lies with the Board of Trustees of the Charity.

5. REVIEW

This policy is reviewed regularly and updated as required.

6. COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

6.1 Written complaints may be sent to the Charity at info@ifa-ipa-benevolentfund.com or Charity Manager, IFA/IPA Group Benevolent Fund, Unite House, 2 Albert Place. London/ N31QB

6.2 Complaints can also be made directly to the [Charity Commission](#) or, if the complaint relates to the use of the complainant's personal information by the Charity, to the [Information Commissioner's Office](#) (the ICO) (see paragraph 11).

7. RECEIVING COMPLAINTS

All complaints will be acknowledged with 5 working days so the complainant knows their complaint has been received and is being investigated

8. RESOLVING COMPLAINTS: STAGE ONE

8.1 The complaint will initially be investigated by the Charity Manager who will record it in a complaints log and be responsible for investigating the issue and taking appropriate action

8.3 If the complaint relates to a specific person, they will be informed and given a fair opportunity to respond.

8.5 Ideally, complainants should receive a definitive reply within four weeks. If this is not possible – because, for example, an investigation has not been fully completed – a progress report will be sent with an indication of when a full reply will be given.

8.6 Whether the complaint is justified or not, the reply to the complainant should describe the action taken to investigate the complaint, the conclusions from the investigation, and any action taken as a result of the complaint.

9. RESOLVING COMPLAINTS: STAGE TWO

9.1 If the complainant feels that the problem has not been satisfactorily resolved at Stage One, they can then request that the matter is passed to a Board Trustee to review. At this point the Chair of Trustees will also be informed.

9.2 The request for Trustee level review should be acknowledged within 5 working days of the Trustee receiving it. The acknowledgement should say who will deal with the case and when the complainant can expect a reply.

9.3 The Chair may investigate the facts of the case herself / himself or delegate a suitably senior person to do so. This may involve reviewing the paperwork of the case and speaking with the person who dealt with the complaint at Stage One.

9.4 If the complaint relates to a specific person, they should be informed and given a further opportunity to respond.

9.5 The person who dealt with the original complaint at Stage One should be kept informed of what is happening.

9.6 Ideally, complainants should receive a definitive reply within four weeks. If this is not possible because, for example, an investigation has not been fully completed, a progress report should be sent with an indication of when a full reply will be given.

9.7 Whether the complaint is upheld or not, the reply to the complainant should describe the action taken to investigate the complaint, the conclusions from the investigation, and any action taken as a result of the complaint.

9.8 The decision taken at this stage is final, unless the Board decides it is appropriate to seek external assistance with resolution.

10. VARIATION OF THE COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

The Board may vary this procedure if it has good reason for doing so, such as a conflict of interest. For example, if the complaint was about the Chair, it would not be appropriate for the Chair to conduct a Stage Two review.

11. COMPLAINTS TO A REGULATOR

11.1 A complainant can complain to the [Charity Commission](#) at any stage. Information about the kind of complaints the Commission can involve itself in can be found on its [website](#).

11.2 If the complaint relates to the use of the complainant's personal information by the Benevolent Fund the complainant may complain to the [ICO](#). Information about the kind of complaints the ICO can involve itself in and how it deals with complaints can be found on its [website](#).

11.3 In the event a regulator receives a complaint in relation to the Charity, the Charity will cooperate with that regulator as appropriate.

12. MONITORING AND LEARNING FROM COMPLAINTS

Complaints are raised regularly at Trustees meetings and reviewed annually to identify any trends which may indicate a need to take further action.