



Phone Credit for Refugees Complaints and Grievances Process

Introduction

We are committed to providing a high-quality, fair, and transparent service. Phone Credit for Refugees (PC4R) pride ourselves on the quality of our service; however we recognise that issues may sometimes arise in the course of our work. This process sets out the ways that we will investigate and respond to complaints about our volunteers and our services. In cases where there is an allegation of a safeguarding abuse, the complaint will be referred and dealt with in accordance with our Safeguarding policy.

Part One

Complaints by recipients about a decision to deny credit

It is our responsibility to ensure that the donations received by the charity are used to help those who most need our assistance. To do this, we have strict eligibility requirements in place that our volunteers must comply with when processing requests for credit.

If a recipient is unhappy with a decision made by a volunteer, it is important that they are able to raise their concerns with a third-party.

How to make a complaint

1. If a recipient is unhappy with a decision made by a volunteer, they can ask the volunteer to refer their case to the Complaints Officer for review. The Complaints Officer can also be contacted directly by the recipient by way of email or Facebook message.
2. The role of the Complaints Officer is to review the initial decision to see whether it complies with the relevant eligibility requirements.

3. The volunteer will provide the Complaints Officer with the details of the refugee's initial request, and the reasons for their initial decision. This may include screenshots of the conversation in question.

Investigation and resolution

4. The Complaints Officer will write to the recipient to discuss their complaint. They may ask the recipient for more information about their initial request.
5. The Complaints Officer will review the initial decision made by the volunteer to confirm that it complies with the relevant eligibility requirements. If the request does not comply with the eligibility requirements, the Complaints Officer may:
 - a. Ask the volunteer to reconsider their initial decision; or
 - b. Substitute their own decision
 - c. Request further information or documentation in order to make a final decision
6. If the volunteer's initial decision complies with the eligibility requirements and no additional mitigating information or documentation is able to be provided, then the Complaints Officer will inform the refugee of this and close the complaint.

Part Two

Complaints about volunteers and/or the charity

We recognise that concerns may arise about the conduct of our volunteers, or the conduct of the charity itself. These concerns may be raised by a member of the Phone Credit for Refugees team, a member of the public, our donors and service users, or another organisation. This process details the way that we will investigate and resolve these concerns.

How to make a complaint

7. Those considering making a complaint are encouraged, wherever possible, to raise concerns directly with the individual concerned in the first instance, in order to seek an early resolution of the issue.

8. If this is not possible, complaints about our volunteers or charity must be made in writing and will be sent to the Chief Volunteer.
9. We will not consider anonymous complaints. This is because in order to properly investigate the concerns, it is important that we be able to contact the Complainant.
10. We expect all of our volunteers to cooperate and act in good faith in accordance with this procedure during an investigation.

Resolution

11. It is our belief that most complaints can be resolved by informal means. The object of this stage of the process is to try to resolve things quickly, fairly, and simply with a minimum level of formality.
12. The Chief Volunteer will acknowledge receipt of the complaint to the Complainant. We may ask for more information at this stage to help us understand the Complainant's concerns.
13. The Chief Volunteer will ask the Complainant's permission to disclose the complaint to the person complained against. In the instance of complaints about the charity's activities (e.g. fundraising or advertising), complaints will be dealt with by the Chief Volunteer.
14. The Chief Volunteer will ask the person complained against to provide a written response to the allegations, which will be shared with the Complainant.
15. For complaints against volunteers, the Chief Volunteer will consider the complaint and the response to determine whether there has been a breach of the Volunteer Code of Conduct or any relevant PC4R policies. The Chief Volunteer will make a decision using the civil standard of proof; that is, is it more likely than not that the behaviour occurred.
16. If a breach is identified, the Chief Volunteer will consider whether it is of a serious nature. If the matter is of a serious nature or it is in the public interest to pursue the

matter further, the Chief Volunteer will refer the matter to the disciplinary process below.

17. If no breaches are identified, the Chief Volunteer will provide both parties with a written summary of their investigation and decision. The complaint will then be closed.
18. For complaints about the charity or its activities, the Chief Volunteer will consider whether there has been a breach of any of the Charity's constitutional documents or policies.
19. If a breach is identified, the Chief Volunteer will produce a written report summarising their findings, and will include a recommended course of action for the charity to address the breach. A copy of this report will be provided to the Complainant. The complaint will then be closed.
20. If no breaches are identified, the Chief Volunteer will provide both parties with a written summary of their investigation and decision. The complaint will then be closed.

Disciplinary Process

21. If a volunteer has breached the Volunteer Code of Conduct or any of PCR's policies, they may be referred to this disciplinary process.
22. The purpose of this process is not to punish volunteers, but to remedy any issues identified during the complaints process.
23. The Chief Volunteer will consider the severity of the breach identified, and may impose one or more of the following sanctions:
 - a. That the volunteer make an apology to the Complainant;
 - b. That the volunteer undergo further training in a specified area;
 - c. That the volunteer be issued with a formal warning;
 - d. That the volunteer be suspended from duty until they can satisfy that they are fit to return to duty; or
 - e. That the volunteer be removed from their post.

24. All final decisions regarding sanction rest with the Chief Volunteer. The Chief Volunteer will provide written reasons for his decision.

25. In cases where a complaint has been made against the Chief Volunteer, the Safeguarding Officer will undertake the investigation and decision.

Appeal

26. Appeals against decisions taken under this process must be made in writing to the Appeal Officer within 28 days of the final decision being reached.

27. Appeals will only be considered if there is evidence to suggest that PC4R has not complied with the rules as set out in this process.

28. If the Appeal Officer considers that the process has not been complied with, he will remit the complaint back to the Chief Volunteer for a proper decision.