

BPIF complaints procedure

Introduction

The BPIF aims to ensure that the highest possible standards of service and conduct are provided by its staff, sub-contractors, Members and Associate Members. One of the principal ways by which we seek to achieve this aim is by listening and responding to the views of our Members and Associate Members and their customers, and for this reason the BPIF National Council has published a procedure for dealing with complaints and grievances.

We do not look on complaints as unwanted. In fact, they may help us to see where services or procedures might be improved. So do let us know where you feel a mistake has been made, or where something has been done that you found unsatisfactory or unacceptable. Even if you do not think your particular concern amounts to a 'complaint' we would still like to know about it. You may help us to deal with something we would otherwise overlook.

We therefore seek to ensure that:

- the process of making a complaint is made as simple as possible;
- we treat any complaint as a clear expression of dissatisfaction that calls for a response;
- we treat it seriously whether it is made in person, by telephone, by letter, by fax, or by e-mail;
- we deal with it promptly, politely and, where appropriate, informally (for example, by telephone);
- we respond in the right way - for example, by means of an explanation, or an apology where things have gone wrong, or information on any action taken etc;
- we learn from complaints and use them to improve services.

Who can use this procedure?

This procedure can be used by anyone who represents:

- a BPIF Member or Associate Member, in making a complaint relating to an employee or sub-contractor engaged by the BPIF;
- a BPIF Member, in making a complaint relating to another BPIF Member or Associate Member;
- a BPIF Associate Member, in making a complaint relating to another Associate Member or Member
- a customer of a BPIF Member or Associate Member, in making a complaint relating to a Member or Associate Member.

How to complain

Step 1: Contacting us in the first instance before making a formal complaint

The first step is to talk to a member of BPIF staff. This can be done quite informally, either directly or by telephone. In respect of any complaint relating to a BPIF Member or Associate Member, you should talk to the BPIF Regional Director covering the area in which they are based. In respect of any complaint relating to a member of BPIF staff, or a sub-contractor of the BPIF, the best staff member to talk to will usually be the person who dealt with the matter you are concerned about (or who was responsible for engaging the services of the sub-contractor for you), as they will be in the best position to help you quickly and to put things right. If they are not available, or you would prefer to approach someone else, then ask for their relevant line manager.

We will try to resolve the problem on the spot if we can. If we can't do this, for example, because information we need is not to hand, then we will take a record of your concern and arrange the best way and time for getting back to you. This will normally be within five working days or we will make some other arrangement acceptable to you.

Step 2: Making a formal complaint

In making a formal complaint relating to a BPIF Member or Associate Member, you should firstly raise the matter with the Member or Associate Member concerned, preferably in writing. If no satisfactory response or explanation is provided, your complaint may then be referred to the BPIF Chief Executive. The Chief Executive will notify the Member or Associate Member concerned in writing of the nature of your complaint, along with a copy of your letter of complaint and any supporting documentation, with a request that the Member or Associate Member responds within 10 working days of the date of sending out the notification. A letter will also be sent to you confirming the action taken and that a response will be sent as soon as possible once received from the Member or Associate Member. If there is any reasonable doubt about your having consented to the letter of complaint being forwarded to the Member or Associate Member, your consent will be sought before a copy of your letter is forwarded.

In appropriate circumstances, the Chief Executive may, with the agreement of both parties concerned, seek to mediate or arbitrate a settlement between the parties. In these circumstances the BPIF may contact either or both parties by telephone or in writing in order to reach an agreed settlement, and will document the agreed outcome in writing to both parties within 5 working days of the outcome having been agreed or otherwise determined.

In making a formal complaint relating to a member of BPIF staff, you should put your complaint in writing to the BPIF Chief Executive, setting out the details, explaining what you think went wrong and what you feel would put things right. If you are not happy about writing a letter, you can always ask a member of staff to take notes of your complaint. You should make sure you agree with what they have recorded and that they provide you with your own copy for reference. This record will be passed promptly to the Chief Executive to deal with.

Once the Chief Executive receives a written complaint, he will arrange for it to be fully investigated. Your complaint will be acknowledged in writing within five working days of receiving it and the letter will say when you can expect a full response. This should normally be within three weeks unless the matter is very complicated, such as where other organisations need to be contacted. Where this is the case, we will still let you know what action is being taken and tell you when we expect to provide you with a full response.

Step 3: Action in the event you are dissatisfied with the results of the complaint investigation

If you are not satisfied with the Chief Executive's investigation you can take your complaint to the BPIF's National Council, the BPIF's governing body. BPIF is a trade association governed by member company representatives, who comprise the membership of the Council. All documents relating to your complaint and to the Chief Executive's investigation will be sent to the BPIF's President (who chairs the Council), and contact details will be provided for you. He/she will let you know within seven working days that they have received your complaint and will tell you when to expect a full response from them.