

Easy Housing Association Complaints Policy

At Easy Housing Association, we value complaints as an opportunity to improve our services, address issues, and make things right for those who voice their concerns. Our policy is designed to:

- Provide a fair and transparent complaints procedure that's easily accessible to anyone wishing to file a complaint.
- Promote awareness of our complaint's procedure, ensuring people know how to contact us with their concerns.
- Ensure that all members of Easy Housing Association are equipped to handle complaints effectively.
- Ensure all complaints are investigated fairly and in a timely manner.
- Encourage the resolution of complaints whenever possible, developing positive relationships.
- Enable the gathering of information from complaints to enhance our services.

Accessibility and awareness

Landlords must publicise the complaints policy and procedure, the Complaint Handling Code, and the Housing Ombudsman Scheme through various means, including leaflets, posters, newsletters, online, and as an integral part of routine communication with residents. EHA will conduct tenant satisfaction meetings and ensure the tenants are given the information on the complaints process during your first support worker meeting. This information will also be on the notice board in your home and will be in your new tenant handbook.

Complaints Procedure

What is a complaint?

A complaint is an expression of dissatisfaction, however made, about the standard of service, actions or lack of action by the organisation (in this case EHA), its own staff, or those acting on its behalf affecting an individual resident or a group of residents.

How to Make a Complaint

If you want to make a complaint, please put it in writing, if possible, by sending us a letter, email, text, via our regular service user questionnaires.

Please explain your issue fully, providing any dates or background information and explaining what you would like to happen to resolve your issue. We also accept complaints raised by representatives on your behalf, such as family members.

You can post your complaint to Easy Housing Association Office at Unit 8, 94 Spencer Street, Hockley, Birmingham, B18 6DB, or you can email it to info@easyhousingassociation.co.uk. You may also make oral complaints by calling us on 0121 328 8436.

Confidentiality

We treat all complaint information with sensitivity and share it only with those who have a legitimate need to know, following relevant data protection requirements and confidentiality procedures.

Complaint Stages

Our formal complaints process consists of two stages, and we aim to resolve complaints at the earliest stage whenever possible:

Stage 1: The complaint is investigated by a member of the team separate from the situation about which the complaint is made.

Stage 2: The complaint investigation and response are reviewed by the Managing Director or CEO.

Receiving Complaints: Stage 1

The complaint will be acknowledged within **two** working days of its receipt, with a full written response provided within **10 working** days. If this timeframe can't be met due to the complexity of the investigation, the member of staff dealing with the complaint will discuss with the tenant and agree an extension period beyond the **10 working** days. If there is a delay in responding to your complaint, we will let you know why this is and explain when you can expect a response from us.

In the unlikely event that an agreement over an extension period cannot be reached, EHA will provide the Housing Ombudsman's contact details so the tenant can challenge our plan for responding.

If all or part of the complaint is not resolved to the tenant's satisfaction at stage one, the tenant can request a review at stage two of the procedure. This request should be made within **one month** of the date of the stage one response. If we decline to escalate a complaint, we will clearly communicate in writing our reasons for not doing so and explain the tenant's right to approach the Ombudsman about our decision.

Stage 2: Complaints Review

If the tenant believes that the problem wasn't satisfactorily resolved at Stage 1, they can request that the complaint be reviewed by the Managing Director or CEO who will investigate further and review the complaint. This will take no longer than **20 working** days. If this timeframe can't be met due to the complexity of the investigation, the member of staff dealing with the complaint will discuss with the tenant and agree an extension period beyond the **20 working** days. This will not exceed a further 10 days without good reason. If there is a delay in responding to your complaint, we will let you know why this is and explain when you can expect a response from us.

In the unlikely event that an agreement over an extension period cannot be reached, EHA will provide the Housing Ombudsman's contact details so the tenant can challenge our plan for responding.

Complaints that may not be considered:

Complaints Regarding Historical Incidents:

Complaints relating to incidents occurring more than six months ago are not covered by this policy. However, exceptions may apply in cases involving matters of safeguarding or health and safety.

Legal Proceedings:

Complaints related to matters for which legal proceedings have commenced will not be considered. Legal proceedings are defined as the filing of official documents, such as a Claim Form and Particulars of Claim, with a court of law.

Previously Addressed Matters:

Any complaints that have been previously reviewed and resolved under this complaints policy will not be revisited.

Policy Variation and Review

The Board may modify the policy when there are valid reasons to do so, such as avoiding conflicts of interest. We annually review complaints to identify trends indicating a need for further action as required to ensure its effectiveness.

Housing Ombudsman Service

Tenants have the option to request consideration of their complaint by the Housing Ombudsman. However, the Ombudsman will not investigate cases that have not gone through all stages of Easy Housing Association complaints procedures.

Complainants can contact the Ombudsman at:

If you remain dissatisfied with this response you can go direct to the Housing Ombudsman Service and they may be able to investigate how we dealt with the matter. The contact details for the Housing Ombudsman Service are:

- Online complaint form: www.housing-ombudsman.org.uk/residents/make-a-complaint/
- Phone: 0300 111 3000
- Email: info@housing-ombudsman.org.uk
- Postal address: Housing Ombudsman Service, PO Box 152, Liverpool L33 7WQ

Review date – **21/11/2024**