

Name of policy	BMS Complaints procedure
Last updated/reviewed	March 2024
Update interval	Every three years
Authorised sign-off	BMS Board of Trustees



Complaints procedure - BMS World Mission

PUBLICISED CONTACT DETAILS FOR COMPLAINTS:

Written complaints may be sent to BMS at:

Complaints
BMS World Mission
PO Box 49
129 Broadway
Didcot
Oxfordshire
OX11 8XA

By email at: complaints@bmsworldmission.org

Verbal complaints may be made in the first instance to any member of BMS staff. Alternatively, you can ask to speak directly to the Governance and Compliance Officer within the Finance and Operations Department, whose responsibility it is to log any complaints on the Complaints log.

BMS will retain a record of each complaint for at least 24 months from the date on which the complaint was made, except where data protection law requires that the information be put beyond use earlier than this (for example, where the complainant within this timeframe requests that their information be destroyed).

1. RESOLVING COMPLAINTS - THE THREE STAGES OF COMPLAINT HANDLING

1.1 Stage 1 – Early resolution

Where possible, complaints will be resolved at first contact with us and/or by the person responsible for the issue. When appropriate, we may offer an explanation or apology to the person making the complaint.

We will ensure that any information is recorded in a systematic way so that if necessary, this can be easily retrieved for reporting and analysis by management, the Board of Trustees or the Fundraising Regulator.

If the complaint is made in person or over the phone the staff member will:

- Write down the facts of the complaint and clarify with the complainant, in so far as is practicable, that the written summary accurately reflects the nature of the complaint.
- Where appropriate, ask the complainant to send a written account by post or by email so that the complaint is recorded in the complainant's own words.
- Take the complainant's name, address and telephone number.

- Note down the nature of the complainant's interaction with BMS.
- Advise the complainant that we have a complaints procedure and how to access a copy of it – either on the BMS website or by us mailing a copy to them.
- Advise the complainant what will happen next and how long it will take.

Whether or not the complaint has been resolved, the complaint information should be passed to the Governance and Compliance Officer within two working days. On receiving this information, the Governance and Compliance Officer will record it in the Complaints log.

We will acknowledge receipt of each complaint promptly, and preferably within five working days.

Consideration will be given to the most appropriate medium (e.g. email, letter) for communicating with the person making the complaint.

1.2 Stage 2 – Assign, assess and investigate

Where an early resolution is not possible, the Governance and Compliance Officer will pass the complaint to a more senior member of staff within the organisation to assess and investigate the complaint further with the aim of coming to a resolution with the complainant.

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

We will keep the complainant up to date on any progress, particularly if there are any delays. Complainants should receive a definitive reply in writing within 28 days of acknowledging receipt of the complaint., particularly if in respect of a fundraising related complaint. This may also include any remedies or resolutions we have put in place to avoid such complaints being made in the future.

1.3 Stage 3 – Escalating complaints further

In the event where the complainant is dissatisfied with the outcome of the review of their complaint, they may request that this is escalated. In this instance, the General Director (or Chair of Trustees in the case the complaint is with regard to the General Director) who will undertake further assessment and investigation. This may involve reviewing the paperwork of the case and speaking with the people who dealt with the complaint at Stages 1 and 2. If the complaint relates to a specific person, they should be informed and given a further opportunity to respond

The people who dealt with the original complaint at Stages 1 and 2 should also be kept informed of what is happening.

Complainants should receive a definitive written reply within 28 days. 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.

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.

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

If the complainant is dissatisfied with the outcome of a fundraising related complaint, they can escalate the complaint after Stage 2 and approach the Fundraising Regulator (see section 2 below for further details).

2. REPORTING TO EXTERNAL BODIES

The 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 their website at: www.charitycommission.gov.uk/publications/cc47.aspx

If a complaint is related to BMS' fundraising effort, the complaint can be raised with the Fundraising Regulator (FR) at: www.fundraisingregulator.org.uk/complaints

The Fundraising Regulator (FR) is an independent non-statutory body that enforces the Code of Fundraising Practice across the UK, and seeks to resolve and adjudicate on issues that may arise between members of the public and fundraising organisations. Complaints should be made to the FR within two months of our final response to a complaint.

The FR will normally only investigate a complaint after we have conducted our internal investigation. The FR will contact us for information and its staff will carry out their own investigation. BMS will co-operate with them fully. We will provide the FR with our complaints record, which will include details of the complaint, the date it was received, details of any investigation we have undertaken and a copy of all communications regarding the issue. If requested, we will provide the FR with copies of our fundraising materials.

The FR has the discretion to specify that no further action is appropriate or to prescribe a certain action in response to the complaint. As a charity registered with the FR, BMS is committed to follow the Code of Fundraising Practice, as set out by the FR, and will comply with any remedy proposed by the FR.

Variation of the complaints procedure

The Board may vary the procedure for good reason. This may be necessary should there be a conflict of interest.

Monitoring and learning from complaints

Complaints are reviewed annually by the Board of Trustees to identify any trends which may indicate a need to take further action.

March 2024