

# Compliments and complaints procedure for volunteers

Lymphoma Action is committed to responding proactively and promptly to any complaints we receive. We take a problem-solving approach that includes reviewing how we work and making any improvements we can. We want volunteers to feel comfortable in raising and discussing concerns.

We also welcome compliments and feedback about your volunteering, which help us recognise the work of our volunteers and staff, and improve the volunteer experience for everyone.

**This procedure relates to complaints made about any aspect of your volunteering, whether by you about your experience of volunteering with us, or about you in your volunteering role. If your complaint is about Lymphoma Action, its services or the conduct or behaviour of staff members outside of your volunteering, you should follow the procedure outlined in [Lymphoma Action's Complaints Procedure](#).**

Contact information can be found at the end of this document.

## Key information

- We record all compliments and complaints to help us continually improve the experience we offer to volunteers and service users.
- You can expect Lymphoma Action to take all complaints seriously and deal with them openly, honestly and fairly.
- All complaints will be treated confidentially, and will only be discussed with those who are directly involved in the problem-solving process.
- A complaint should be made as soon as possible after the incident has happened to help us identify any issues and resolve them promptly.
- Every effort should be made to resolve a problem through the informal process, which is intended to be quick and responsive to a complaint.
- Sometimes a complaint might progress to the formal process because the informal approach didn't reach a satisfactory outcome for everyone involved.
- Serious incidents and complaints will be managed through the formal process. For example, gross misconduct; deliberately acting outside of the Charity's policies; procedures, instructions and training; safeguarding incidences.

## Compliments and feedback

If you have any compliments or feedback to share about volunteering with the Charity, you can send these by email to [volunteering@lymphoma-action.org.uk](mailto:volunteering@lymphoma-action.org.uk).

Receiving feedback helps us to build on what we are doing well as we continue to develop your volunteer experience.

Any compliments and feedback that we receive will be shared internally with staff and other volunteers.

## If you have a complaint or concern

If you have a complaint about anything to do with your volunteer role and activities, including the behaviour of other volunteers, please tell your volunteer manager in the first instance.

However, if you don't feel comfortable discussing the issue directly with your volunteer manager, for example if your complaint is about them, or you have a complaint about volunteering generally, please contact the Volunteering Team.

Whoever you speak with, we will listen to your concerns, offer support and advise you on any steps that need to be taken throughout the process.

Should a complaint be raised about another individual, we will manage and investigate this fairly, including asking the person about the complaint from their point of view.

## Informal process

Your volunteer manager or the Volunteering Team is there to talk with you about your concerns. They will arrange to have an informal discussion with you about your complaint and ask how you would like to see it addressed. It may be possible to action this straight away, however, your volunteer manager may need to discuss the matter with colleagues.

You can use the formal process if:

- you are not satisfied with the outcome of the discussion
- we cannot resolve your complaint informally
- a problem is more serious and requires further investigation.

## **Formal process**

A formal complaint should be made in writing to the Director of Services. They may arrange a call with you to discuss your complaint.

The Director will investigate the issue and respond to your complaint within 10 working days. The response will share the outcome of any investigation, a course of action and/or any proposed solutions.

## **Review**

If you are not satisfied with the outcome of your formal complaint, you can ask for a review. You should set out the reasons that you are dissatisfied with the outcome in writing and send this to the Chief Executive.

The review will take into consideration your original complaint, how it has been investigated, the outcome and proposed solution. If the review finds that your complaint was not satisfactorily managed, a further investigation will take place.

The outcome of this review is final and no further action will be taken under this procedure.

## **If someone makes a complaint about you in your volunteer role**

Your volunteer manager is there to provide ongoing support for your volunteering, including during the complaint process. We will always make sure you have a fair opportunity to discuss it with us throughout.

Your volunteer manager may need to discuss a complaint with the Volunteering Team or with other colleagues, and any discussion will respect your privacy by not identifying you unless it's necessary, and by not disclosing any sensitive information without your permission.

The complainant will be kept informed during the process but any confidential information will not be disclosed.

We aim to find the best solution for the complainant, for you as a volunteer and for Lymphoma Action and our services.

## **Informal process**

Your volunteer manager and/or the Volunteering Team will arrange to have an informal discussion with you about the complaint. This discussion should be open, honest and objective, with the aim of finding out more about the issue.

If the matter can be resolved, there may be no need for any further action. However, we may identify and agree on some objectives, as well as anything we can do to help you. For example, extra support or further training. In this case, we will agree a date to complete and review this with you.

## **Formal process**

If we cannot resolve the problem through the informal process, or if the complaint is serious (see under Serious Incidents, below), we will manage the complaint formally.

The Director of Services will write to you with details of the complaint and invite you to attend a meeting to discuss it. You are welcome to be accompanied by another person for support.

You will have the opportunity to tell us what happened, from your point of view. We will make recommendations following the meeting, and depending on the nature of the complaint, we will aim to identify additional developmental goals and/or the support we can offer you.

If we cannot find a mutually agreeable solution for everyone involved, we may end your volunteering role with us. Lymphoma Action has the right to end your volunteering if it is considered that your performance or behaviour does not meet the standards required. However, this will always be a last resort.

If you decide that during the formal process the volunteer role is not right for you, we will support you to end your volunteering. However, the complaint and any investigation into the matter will continue as we have a duty to the complainant.

## **Review**

If you are not satisfied with the outcome of the formal process, you can ask for a review. You should set out the reasons that you are dissatisfied in writing and send this to the Chief Executive.

The review process is the same as managing complaints raised by you - see above.

The outcome of this review is final and no further action will be taken under this procedure.

## Serious incidents

Should a serious complaint be raised about you, or a serious incident occur, you may be suspended immediately from your volunteer role while an investigation is carried out under the formal process above. This decision can only be made by the Director of Services, and will be confirmed in writing to you.

**A serious incident may include, but is not limited to:**

- theft; harassment, bullying or assault; abusive or offensive language or behaviour; being under the influence of alcohol or drugs whilst undertaking volunteering activities.
- deliberately or repeatedly acting outside of the Charity's policies, procedures, instructions and training.
- serious breach of data protection and confidentiality.

If we conclude that you have responsibility, in that you acted outside of our policies, processes, training or guidance, we might be unable to offer you the opportunity to volunteer with us, either in this role or in any role, going forward. We will keep you informed of the outcomes following our investigation and the decisions made, and discuss these with you.

## Contact the Volunteering Team

If you have any questions, queries or concerns about our problem-solving procedure, please get in contact with us:



[volunteering@lymphoma-action.org.uk](mailto:volunteering@lymphoma-action.org.uk)



01296 619415

## Relevant contact details

Lymphoma Action, Unit 3, Bell Business Park, Smeaton Close, Aylesbury,  
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### Director of Services

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### Chief Executive

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