

LIC POLICY AND PROCEDURE ON COMPLAINTS

Our aim:

Lewisham Islamic Centre is committed to providing quality services for its attendees and working in an open and accountable way that builds the trust and respect of all involved. One of the ways in which we can continue to improve our service is by listening and responding to the views of our staff and attendees, and in particular by responding positively to complaints, and by putting mistakes right.

Therefore we aim to ensure that:

- making a complaint is as easy as possible;
- we treat a complaint as a clear expression of dissatisfaction with our service which calls for an immediate response;
- we deal with it promptly, politely and, when appropriate, confidentially;
- we respond in the right way - for example, with an explanation, or an apology where we have got things wrong, or information on any action taken etc;
- we learn from complaints, use them to improve our service, and review annually our complaints policy and procedures.

We recognise that many concerns will be raised informally, and dealt with quickly. Our aims are to:

- resolve informal concerns quickly;
- keep matters low-key;
- enable mediation between the complainant and the individual to whom the complaint has been referred.

An informal approach is appropriate when it can be achieved. But if concerns cannot be satisfactorily resolved informally, then the formal complaints procedure should be followed.

Definition:

LIC defines a complaint as 'any expression of dissatisfaction that relates to Lewisham Islamic Centre and that requires a formal response'.

Purpose:

The formal complaints procedure is intended to ensure that all complaints are handled fairly, consistently and wherever possible resolved to the complainant's satisfaction.

Lewisham Islamic Centre's responsibility will be to:

- acknowledge the formal complaint in writing;
- respond within a stated period of time;
- deal reasonably and sensitively with the complaint;
- take action where appropriate.

A complainant's responsibility is to:

- bring their complaint, in writing, to LIC's attention normally within 8 weeks of the issue arising;
- raise concerns promptly and directly with a member of staff in LIC;
- explain the problem as clearly and as fully as possible, including any action taken to date;
- allow LIC a reasonable time to deal with the matter;
- recognise that some circumstances may be beyond LIC's control.

Responsibility for Action:

All Staff, and Trustees of LIC.

Confidentiality:

Except in exceptional circumstances, every attempt will be made to ensure that both the complainant and LIC maintain confidentiality. However the circumstances giving rise to the complaint may be such that it may not be possible to maintain confidentiality (with each complaint judged on its own merit). Should this be the case, the situation will be explained to the complainant.

Monitoring and Reporting:

Trustees of LIC will receive annually an anonymised report of complaints made and their resolution.

Formal Complaints Procedure

Stage 1

In the first instance, if you are unable to resolve the issue informally, you should write to the member of staff who dealt with you, or their manager, so that he or she has a chance to put things right. If your complaint concerns a Trustee of LIC, rather than a member of LIC's staff, you should write formally to the individual concerned. In your letter you should set out the details of your complaint, the consequences for you as a result, and the remedy you are seeking. You can expect your complaint to be acknowledged within a week of receipt. You should get a response and an explanation within 15 working days. If you are unsure which member of LIC staff to write to, your complaint should be sent to LIC's Management Committee.

Stage 2

If you are not satisfied with the initial response to the complaint then you can write to LIC's Chairman ask for your complaint and the response to be reviewed. You can expect the Chairman to acknowledge your request within a week of receipt and a response within 15 working days. LIC's aim is to resolve all matters as quickly as possible. However, inevitably some issues will be more complex and therefore may require longer to be fully investigated. Consequently timescales given for handling and responding to complaints are indicative. If a matter requires more detailed investigation, you will receive an interim response describing what is being done to deal with the matter, and when a full reply can be expected and from whom.

Final Stage

If you are not satisfied with the subsequent reply from LIC's Chairman, then you have the option of writing to the Board of Trustees stating the reason why you are dissatisfied with the outcome. You must do this within 10 days of receiving the written response from the Chairman.

The response will normally be within 10 working days, and you will be told when you can expect to hear the outcome of the investigation.

