



# Agapé UK Complaints Policy

## General policy

Agapé UK takes complaints seriously and commits to deal with all complaints in a confidential, timely and appropriate manner.

### Our policy is:

- To provide a fair complaints policy which is clear and easy to use.
- To make sure that everyone at Agapé UK (all staff, the Executive Leadership Team (ELT) and the Council of Management, (CoM, the Trustees of Agapé UK), are aware of this policy and know how to handle complaints.
- To ensure in all cases that complaints are handled in a fair and timely way, using Biblical principles.
- To make sure that, wherever possible, disputes and disagreements are amicably resolved and that relationships are restored.
- To gather information which helps us improve what we do in the future.

All complaints and any associated information provided will be handled sensitively, and in accordance with relevant data protection requirements. However, Agapé UK reserves the right to involve external parties (including the police and other authorities) and to take legal advice where this is considered necessary.

The overall responsibility for this policy and its implementation rests with the CoM of Agapé UK.

### Definition of a Complaint:

- For this policy, complaints are deemed as serious in nature and the complainant will likely require a formal response, (this is in comparison with service feedback issues whereby Agapé UK will capture the matters that affect the day to day services, these are likely to be responded to verbally and quickly).
- This policy does not cover complaints from staff, who should refer to Agapé UK's Grievance Procedures.

## Receiving complaints

Complaints may come from any individual or organisation who has a legitimate interest in Agapé UK, including the general public if something is perceived to be improper. A complaint can be received orally, in person or by phone, by email or in writing.

Written complaints may be sent to Agapé UK's offices at 167 Newhall Street, Birmingham, B3 1SW or by e-mail at [complaints@agape.org.uk](mailto:complaints@agape.org.uk). Verbal complaints may be made by phone to +44 (0) 121 7654404 or in person to any of Agapé UK's staff, ELT or CoM members.

Oral complainants must be informed that certain aspects of oral complaints will be documented (either at the time or later) including but not limited to:

- The name and contact details of the complainant.
- The date and time that the complaint was received.
- The substance of the complaint.
- Any formal relationship that the complainant has with Agapé UK.

Oral complainants must be informed that although complaints will be handled confidentially, the person handling the complaint may share these with members of the ELT or CoM in accordance with this policy. In certain cases, and for the avoidance of doubt, oral complainants may be requested to repeat their complaint in writing.

## Resolving complaints

In many cases, a complaint is best resolved by the person responsible for the issue being complained about. If the complaint has been received by that person, they may be able to resolve it swiftly and should do so if possible and appropriate. However, no staff member should deal with a complaint without discussing it with their supervisor.

Whether or not the complaint has been resolved, the complaint information should be passed to the ELT member responsible for complaints, as soon as possible, within 2 business days.

On receiving the complaint, the ELT member responsible for complaints, will record it in the complaints log. If it has not already been resolved, they will delegate an appropriate person (the appropriate team leader, member of the ELT or CoM) to investigate it and to take appropriate action. If the complaint relates to a specific person, they should be informed and given a fair opportunity to respond ensuring that any sensitive information is handled appropriately.

Complaints will be acknowledged by the ELT member responsible for complaints within 5 working days of being received and will include details of who is dealing with the complaint and when the complainant can expect to have a response.

Complaints will be investigated thoroughly and objectively, and responded to fairly, proportionately and appropriately.

A team leader, member of the ELT or the CoM will use best endeavours to provide a definitive response within 28 days of receiving the complaint. If, because of ongoing investigations or for other reasons this is not possible, a progress update will be provided to the complainant within 1 month of receiving the complaint.

### **A definitive response will include:**

- Actions taken to investigate the complaint.
- Conclusions drawn from the investigation.
- Actions taken as a result of the investigation.
- Right to appeal the response and the timeline for the appeal.

## Appeals and escalation

Where the complainant is not satisfied with the response, they should inform the ELT or the CoM of this dissatisfaction in writing within three months of receiving the response.

Due to the size of Agapé UK it cannot be guaranteed that a different group of personnel that dealt with the original complaint will be responsible for reviewing the appeal. However, wherever possible a different member of the ELT or CoM will take the lead in investigating the appeal.

As long as this notice of dissatisfaction is received within 3 months as specified above, the member of the ELT or CoM will acknowledge this correspondence within 2 weeks and will use best endeavours to provide a definitive response within 2 months. Notices of dissatisfaction that are received outside of that timeframe will be considered at the discretion of the ELT or CoM.

This appeal decision will be considered final.

At any time, the complainant can complain directly to the Charity Commission or any other appropriate regulating authority, including [The Fundraising Regulator](#) where the complaints relates to Agapé UK's fundraising activity. The information about the types of complaints that the Charity Commission can become involved with are set out on [their website](#).

## Recording Complaints

All complaints, together with any actions undertaken, will be recorded in Agapé UK's complaints log which will be reviewed by the ELT and/or CoM on a regular basis. Any conclusions and further action required as a result of this review will be formally recorded in the minutes of a CoM meeting.

Complaints are reviewed annually to identify any trends which may indicate a need to take further action.