

## **The Howard League for Penal Reform complaints policy**

The Howard League for Penal Reform has a long history of charitable works dating back to 19<sup>th</sup> century. The charity works for less crime, safer communities and few people in prison. Our strategic vision is set by our Board of Trustees and our work is overseen by an executive management team.

We hope that those who come into contact with us will not have cause to complain. However, the Howard League for Penal Reform takes complaints seriously.

This policy aims to:

- Set out a fair complaints procedure which is clear and easy to use
- Make sure complaints are investigated fairly and in a timely way.

### **Complaints falling under this policy**

This policy deals with complaints about the Howard League for Penal Reform for people who feel they haven't received the service that we said we would provide or are unhappy with the service we provided.

### **Issues falling outside of this policy**

This policy does not cover legal services. Our legal service is subject to its own complaints procedure in accordance with legal and regulatory requirements.

This policy does not cover situations where you disagree with the Howard League for Penal Reform on a policy issue. The Howard League for Penal Reform welcomes both positive and challenging feedback from its stakeholders. We believe that engaging in debate and discussion is a healthy feature of civil society. Such engagement falls outside of this policy.

This policy does not cover complaints from staff, who should use the Howard League for Penal Reform's disciplinary and grievance policies contained in the Handbook.

### **If you wish to complain**

A complaint can be received verbally, by phone, by email or in writing.

It is helpful if you can clearly set out:

- Who you are
- How we can contact you
- What you think went wrong
- What you think we should do to put it right.

We may require proof that you are who you say you are.

## **What you can expect from us**

We will ensure that your complaint is:

- treated seriously
- handled fairly without bias or discrimination
- treated confidentially.

## **Stage 1**

Your complaint will be acknowledged within 14 days.

We will consider whether the complaint can be resolved informally in the first instance, as research by the Charity Commission shows that complaints can often be managed most effectively where they have first arisen.

## **Stage 2**

If this is not possible or appropriate for the matter to be resolved where it has first arisen, someone who has not been involved with your concern will look fairly at your complaint.

The reviewer will look into your complaint and will aim to respond to you within 30 working days. If this is not possible, you will be provided with a time estimate for a response.

They will tell you the:

- conclusions from their decision
- reasons for the outcome.

## **Policy issues**

If your complaint concerns a policy issue or our charitable work, you may consider contacting the Charity Commission.

## **Responsibility**

Overall responsibility for this policy and its implementation lies with the Board of Trustees.

## **Review**

This policy is reviewed regularly and updated as required.

Adopted on: 12 October 2016

Last reviewed: 12 October 2016