



## Maldivian Red Crescent's – Complaints and Appeals Mechanism

<b>Title</b>	Complaints and Appeals Mechanism	<b>Version No</b>	
<b>Authorized By</b>	Maldivian Red Crescent Governing Board	<b>Version Date</b>	
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## **Complaints and Appeals Mechanism**

### **1. Introduction**

The Maldivian Red Crescent is committed to fostering a secure and inclusive environment for all individuals associated with our organization. To effectively address concerns, complaints, and appeals brought forth by MRC personnel and the public.

This mechanism outlines the process for filing complaints or appeals and details the actions of the Complaints Committee to complaints received by MRC, in accordance with clause 2.1 of MRC's Complaints and Appeals Policy. The CAM aims to foster a culture of accountability within MRC by assuring accessibility to complaints and policy, procedures, and systems in all spheres of its work.

### **2. Mandate of the committee**

- The Committee shall carry out the functions assigned to it by Article 10.7 and 10.8 of the Statutes.
- Receiving, investigating, and resolving complaints and appeals by MRC personnel, stakeholders, and the public.
- Conduct investigations and recommend actions to the Governing Board and the Management based on breach of Seven Fundamental Principles, Statutes, Rules of Procedures, Policies, and Code of Conduct of MRC.
- In fulfilment of its tasks the Committee cooperates closely with the Governing Board, Finance Commission and Management of MRC and exchange information of general nature and specific cases as required.
- The Complaints Committee may assign individual members or select committees among the members as required for the investigation of complaints received by the committee.

### **3. Responsibilities and authority**

The Complaints Committee is the guardian of the Complaints and Appeals Policy. All concerns and feedback received directly in written form to the Committee if governance related must be forwarded to the President, thus the Governing Board of MRC and all concerns and feedback received related to management must be forwarded to the Secretary General of MRC.

Concerns and feedback that do not necessitate corrective action will not undergo further investigation by the committee. However, the receipt of such concerns/feedback must be acknowledged in writing.

A complaint is an expression of dissatisfaction. It is a specific grievance of anyone who has been negatively affected by an unacceptable service or actions by Stakeholders, beneficiaries, MRC Personnel or any party directly involved on behalf of MRC.

The Complaints Committee shall ensure the exclusion of any member from meetings or discussions if allegations are presented against them during the investigation of the case. The complaints shall be categorized as below.

#### **Non-Sensitive Complaints**

Type 1: Issues related to the quality and decisions of program implementation.

- Severe risk for the image of the Maldivian Red Crescent
- Immediate reputational risk on the organization as a whole

(If it is not considered as a severe reputational risk the complaint, shall be forwarded to the Management, to take corrective actions to avoid such issues related to program implementation in the future and these corrective measures must be communicated with the Governing Board as well as Complaints Committee.

Type 2: Issues related to the breach of the Statutes and Rules of Procedure of MRC

#### Sensitive Complaints

Type 3: Issues related to harassment, sexual exploitation, child abuse or any type of abuse upon a person by any MRC personnel and the breach of policies related to it.

Type 4: Issues related to Fraud, Corruption, misuse of MRC funds or aids by any MRC personnel or partner organization.

Type 5: Violation of the seven fundamental principles, and non-adherence to Code of Conduct, existing policies, and procedures of MRC

4. All complaints related to staff conduct must be forwarded to the Secretary General and will be dealt with in accordance with the Human Resource Policy and Staff rules and regulations of MRC. However, the involvement of staff in governance related matters being reported to the Complaints Committee must be informed to both the Secretary General and the Governing Board and investigated as necessary.

#### **Submission of Complaints or Appeal**

Complaints, Appeals, and allegations submitted to the Complaints Committee must be submitted as a last resort. The complainant should have taken all measures to resolve the matter if related to a staff with the management and if related to a member, volunteer with the unit and Governing Board of MRC.

All complaints must be submitted in writing either via email or via the Complaints Submission Form along with relevant supporting documents. Emails or Complaints Submission form must be emailed to [complaints@redcrescent.org.mv](mailto:complaints@redcrescent.org.mv) or physical form can be submitted to the Headquarter of Maldivian Red Crescent in a sealed envelope addressed to the Complaints Committee.

Individuals with special needs are encouraged to submit their complaints through any convenient means for them.

#### Submission of Complaints to Units

All complaints related to members and volunteers of a Unit must be initially submitted to the Unit Board in writing either via an email or through the submission of the Complaint Submission Form. The Unit Board may select a subcommittee to investigate the issue being reported and conduct necessary inquiries and investigations related to the complaint prior to taking necessary disciplinary action. Any such action along with the inquiry report must be communicated with the Governing Board. If the volunteer or member is in disagreement with the disciplinary action taken, he/she may appeal to the Complaint Committee requesting to review the decision of the Unit Board.

As a precedent, the Unit boards shall follow the Complaints Handling Process of this mechanism, and as necessary seek guidance and support from the Complaints Committee in handling complaints received by the Unit.

## **5. Confidentiality**

All complaints and appeals will be treated confidentially. Information will only be shared with individuals directly involved in the investigation process. The Complaints Committee must ensure the confidentiality of all complaints and the Complainants while maintaining transparency of the investigation process. The Committee must also ensure the confidentiality of the records and ensure the information is stored and managed appropriately with the support of the management of MRC.

### Complaints Handling Process

#### Acknowledgement

- a) If the complaint submitted has no details of the complainant or the description is not adequate, the Complaint Committee has the right to deal with the complaint as deemed fit by the majority of the members of the Committee.
- b) Following the submission of a complaint a written acknowledgement of receipt of the complaint must be made within 3 working days along with an outline of the proposed course of action to follow up on the complaint by the Complaints Committee.
- c) The Complaints Committee must maintain records of the complaints received within a Complaint Registry Sheet. The Registry sheet must contain information such as case registration number, date of receipt of complaint, date of acknowledgement, description of the complaint, outcome of the complaint, date of final date of closure along with other required details of the complainant.
- d) The initial meeting of the Complaint Committee upon receipt of a complaint shall determine if the complaint falls within the responsibility of the Committee and whether the complaint prima facie holds ground.

#### Investigation and response to Complaints/Appeals received.

- a) If the complaint falls within the ambit of the Complaints Committee and the initial information provided in the complaint is enough to act upon, the complaint can be further investigated as deemed fit by the Committee.
- b) The entire handling process of the complaint should maintain confidentiality, non-discrimination, avoid conflicts of interest and maintain complete impartiality.
- c) The Complaint Committee shall investigate the allegations, specify its proposed actions in conclusion to the complaint or appeal and resolve the complaint within 30 working days of receiving the complaint.
- d) If due to various reasons the Complaints Committee is unable to close the investigation of the complaint within 30 working days, the committee must ensure that the investigation is completed, and case is closed within 90 working days from the day of receipt of the complaint. In the event that the investigation extends beyond 90 working days due to unforeseen circumstances, the complaints committee shall determine the appropriate duration for the case. Any resulting delays will be formally communicated to the complainant in writing.

- e) The Complaints Committee may appoint not less than 2 members of the Committee to investigate the complaint on the committee's behalf and report to the committee. The Committee may also consult members of the Management, Governing Board and seek legal counsel where necessary during the investigation.
- f) The Committee may obtain information from and/or interview the complainant(s) and any other parties identified by the Committee as relevant to the complaint. Interview statements should be written down and signed by the interviewee and interview audio shall be recorded for record keeping purposes with the consent of parties involved.
- g) During any point of the investigation, if there is sufficient reason to believe that the complaint involves unlawful actions the committee shall inform both the Secretary General and President and seek legal advice prior to forwarding the complaint to the authorities. Any accusations against the President shall be reported according to the established hierarchy of the Governing Board.

#### **6. Decisions of the Complaints Committee**

- a) The decision of the Complaints Committee shall be final and binding on all issues related to the expulsion of members as per Article 4.11 of the Statutes of the MRC. However, the decision taken by the Complaints Committee regarding the complaints mentioned under Article 10.7 of the Statutes can be appealed to an ad hoc committee appointed in the next General Assembly. The decision of this ad hoc committee will be considered binding and final.
- b) The Complaints Committee shall not take any decisions that are against the laws of the Maldives.
- c) A decision shall be reached only after recognizing and allowing a fair hearing involving both sides of the dispute matter.
- d) The Complaints Committee has full access without any limitation whatsoever, to all books and records at all levels of the Maldivian Red Crescent.

#### Communication of decisions

- The Complaints Committee shall communicate the decision of the Committee in writing to the complainant within the specific period.
- The Complaint Committee must forward the outcome document of the complaint either to the President and Secretary General as necessary.

#### Correction and Corrective Action

The Maldivian Red Crescent must take all appropriate corrections and corrective actions regarding the complaints and appeals accepted in accordance with the decisions of the Complaints Committee.