

JMECA and JEMT Complaints Policy and Procedure

Version History:

Version	Date Agreed	Status
V1	21 st September 2022	Agreed at September Directors' Meeting
V1.1	19 th June 2026	Agreed at June Directors' Meeting

Complaints Policy

1. Complaints Policy Statement

JMECA and JEMT:

- are committed to providing a good standard of quality services to service users, other agencies and organisations
- will take seriously any concern or complaint and will look into it promptly, for resolution as quickly as possible
- recognise that all service users, agencies and organisations
 - have the right to raise concerns or complaints about our services
 - have access to clear information on how to voice complaints and concerns
- will ensure that this concerns and complaints procedure is open to everyone who receives or requests a service from JEMT and people acting on their behalf
- will ensure that this policy is available on JMECA's website
- will deal with complaints in line with JEMT Confidentiality policy
- will keep a register of all complaints, which will be reviewed regularly by the Board of Directors
- will ensure that complaints procedure will be part of the process of monitoring the quality, effectiveness and non-discriminatory nature of its services

All staff, volunteers and Board of Director members are required to read, understand and comply with this policy and its procedures.

2. Introduction

2.1 JMECA and JEMT strive for high standards in service delivery and welcome feedback from individuals, users of our services, stakeholders, funding bodies and anyone who works with us, on all aspects of our services. Such feedback is invaluable in helping us evaluate and improve our work.

2.2 The objectives of this complaints policy and procedures are to:

- Ensure everyone knows how to make a complaint and how a complaint will be handled
- Ensure that complaints are dealt with consistently, fairly and sensitively within clear time frames
- Provide individuals with a fair and effective way to complain about our work
- Ensure that complaints are monitored to improve our services

2.3 JMECA and JEMT will ensure that we:

- Listen carefully to complaints and treat complaints as confidential, where possible
- Record, store and manage all complaints accurately and in accordance with the Data Protection Act
- Investigate the complaint fully, objectively and within the stated time frame
- Notify the complainant of the results of the investigation and any right of appeal
- Inform the complainant of any action that will be implemented in order to ensure that there is no re-occurrence
- Report on an annual basis, the number of complaints received, the outcomes and any actions taken.

3. Definition of a complaint

3.1 A complaint is any expression of dissatisfaction by an individual, whether justified or not. It includes complaints about how personal data is handled.

3.2 An individual may make a complaint if they feel JMECA or JEMT have:

- Failed to provide a service or an acceptable standard of service or made a mistake in the way the service was provided
- Failed to act in a proper way
- Provided an unfair service

3.3 This policy and procedure relates only to complaints received about JMECA, JEMT or the charities for which either acts as trustee and their services.

4. Concern or Complaint

4.1 It is important to establish the difference between a concern and a complaint. Taking informal concerns seriously at the earliest stage will reduce the likelihood of their developing into formal complaints.

4.2 If you have any concerns about our work please tell a member of staff, worker or director as soon as possible, so they can quickly understand your concerns and try to put things right.

4.3 If you are not happy with the response to your concern and/or you want to make a formal complaint please follow the procedure below.

Complaints Procedure

5. Complaints Procedure

5.1 JMECA and JEMT aim to settle the majority of complaints quickly and satisfactorily by the member of staff who provides the service. The complaint may be resolved quickly by way of an apology or by an acceptable explanation to the individual.

5.2 There are three stages to the complaint's procedure:

- Stage One – the complaint
- Stage Two – investigation
- Stage Three – appeal

6. Stage One - Complaint

6.1 The complaint can be written or if the individual prefers they can tell someone at JEMT, or someone else, who will write it down for them. The complainant will need to sign it. A complaint form is available to use at Appendix 1

6.2 Individuals wishing to make a complaint should contact the person who provided the service, or a director. Alternatively, they can contact us by writing to: JEMT, 1 Hart House, The Hart, Farnham, Surrey GU9 7HJ.

6.3 The complaint should include the complainants' name and address, the nature and date of the complaint and how they want to see it resolved. The complaints form can be requested and can be sent to the complainant.

6.4 On receipt, each complaint will be allocated a reference number and logged on the complaints register. Complainants must receive an acknowledgement within 30 calendar days of receipt of a signed complaint.

7. Stage Two - Investigation

7.1 All complaints at this stage should be dealt with by the Operations Manager, unless the complaint relates to the Operations Manager, in which case they will be dealt with by the Vice Chair. If they need to meet with the complainant, they will do so within seven working days of acknowledging the complaint.

7.2 Complaints will be fully investigated without undue delay, and a written response provided to the complainant within ten working days by the investigator.

7.3 The complainant will receive written confirmation of the outcome of any investigation, any recommendations/remedies made, such as reviewing of policies, staff development and training or appropriate improvement to our services.

7.4 Where the complaint is upheld an apology should be offered.

7.5 Occasionally investigations may take longer, particularly if the complaint is complex. Should this be the case a holding letter will be sent after ten working days and a final date given for a conclusion to be reached.

7.6 If an individual remains dissatisfied with the outcome from Stage Two they can appeal within fourteen working days of the date of the outcome and progress to Stage Three.

7.7 The complaints register will be updated, and any pending complaints flagged so they are followed up.

8. Stage Three - Appeal

8.1 If the complaint cannot be resolved to the complainant's satisfaction at Stage Two, or if the Operations Manager feels that the complaint is of a very serious nature then it will be referred to the Vice Chair.

8.2 If the Vice Chair dealt with the complaint at Stage 2 or the complaint is about the Vice Chair then the matter will be referred to the Chair.

8.3 The Vice Chair or Chair will acknowledge receipt within fourteen calendar days of the receipt of the appeal. They will review the Stage Two investigation and recommend one of the following actions within ten working days from the date the complainant stated they wanted to take the complaint to Stage Three:

- Uphold the action taken at Stage Two
- Make changes to the Stage Two recommendation/actions

8.4 The complainant should be informed in writing of the outcome of Stage Three. The decision reached about this complaint will then be final but other options available to the complainant (as listed below) should be detailed in the letter.

8.5 If, after JMECA/JEMT has been through the three stages, the complainant is still not satisfied with the result, they should be advised that there is no further right of appeal with JMECA/JEMT but they could approach any of the following agencies for advice:

- A solicitor
- Citizens Advice Bureau

In the case of complaints about handling of personal data, the complainant has the right to refer the concerns to the UK Information Commissioner's Officer.

This should be done within one month of receiving the outcome from the appeal.

9. Anonymous complaints

9.1 Complaints received anonymously will be recorded and considered, but action may be limited if further information is required to ensure a full and fair investigation.

10. Data protection

10.1 To process a complaint JMECA/JEMT will hold personal data about the complainant, which the individual provides, and which other people give in response to the complaint. We will hold this data securely and only use it to address the complaint. The identity of the person making the complaint will only be known to those who need to consider the complaint and will not be revealed to other people or made public. However, it may not be possible to preserve confidentiality in some circumstances, for example, where relevant legislation applied, or allegations are made, which involve the conduct of third parties.

10.2 JMECA/JEMT will normally destroy complaints files in a secure manner six years after the complaint has been closed.

11. Monitoring

11.1 Complaints are an important tool which will allow us to learn about the services we provide. They provide a useful source of information about how individuals see our services and how we are serving them. To ensure we can learn from complaints the following data will be collected:

- Name and address
- Name of person dealing with the complaint
- Date of complaint and response
- Nature of complaint
- Action(s) taken/recommendations made in response to the complaint
- Lessons learnt

11.2 Complaints information will be considered on a regular basis by the Resources and Governance Committee and reported annually to the JMECA and JEMT Boards of Directors. Wherever possible the data will be used to improve and develop the service.

Appendix 1

JEMT Ltd / JMECA Complaint Form

We set high standards for all our services and our aim is to meet those standards all of the time. We don't always get it right and when we don't and you have a complaint we want you to tell us.

If you have a complaint about JEMT Ltd or JMECA then please see our Complaints Policy and Procedure. Anybody who wishes to make a formal complaint can do so either in writing by letter/email (secretary@jmeca.org.uk) or by downloading from on our website (www.jmeca.org.uk) a copy of the Complaint Form or by requesting the form in writing from our JEMT/JMECA office, 1 Hart House, The Hart, Farnham, Surrey GU9 7HJ. The form should be completed, signed and posted to our Farnham Office at the above address, marked for the attention of the Operations Manager or completed and attached to an e-mail to secretary@jmeca.org.uk

Details of Person or Persons making complaint

Title:	First name:	Last name:
Email:		
Contact phone number:		
Postal Address:		

What are the details of your complaint? What date did it happen? Who was involved and what is the nature of your complaint?

Have you brought this to our attention before?

Yes

No

If yes, who did you speak to?

Please tell us what you feel should/should not have happened?

Please tell us what you would like us to do now?

Is it alright to contact you using the personal details you have given?

Yes

☐

No

☐

If so, how would you prefer to be contacted?

Email

☐

Telephone

☐

Letter

☐

Please note: There are some complaints that cannot be investigated because they have been made anonymously, based on previous complaints or do not directly relate to JEMT services or people.

OFFICE USE ONLY:

Person dealing with complaint:

Date received: