

## Complaints Policy & Procedure

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BTBA  
complaints policy

At the BTBA we  
recognise that:

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everyone  
who bowls and coaches with, or organises events on behalf of our  
sport has the right to a high standard of service

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those  
who come to bowl or support have the right to complain if they are  
not happy with the standard of service they receive

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learning  
from complaints helps us to improve the service we provide

The purpose of  
this policy and procedure is to:

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help  
us to provide a service of the highest standard to all those who  
come to BTBA tournaments, clubs or other affiliated events.

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help  
us to ensure that children and families using or wishing to use the BTBA tournaments, clubs or other affiliated events know they have a right to complain about our service if they need to help us to deal with complaints in a positive way and use them to improve our service

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set  
out the issues that could be covered under this procedure

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set  
out the steps that children, young people and their families should take if they wish to make a complaint

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set  
out how we can deal with complaints in a fair and consistent way.

This  
policy and procedure applies to all children and young people attending or wishing to attend BTBA tournaments, clubs or other affiliated event. It is not intended to be used by staff or volunteers who are unhappy about their own experience in the workplace. In these circumstances, staff should use the grievance policy and procedure referred to in the official rules of the BTBA.

It is  
also not intended to cover concerns that staff or volunteers may have about issues of possible malpractice or wrongdoing in the workplace. These should be dealt with under the whistle-blowing procedure.

If  
anyone, whether staff member, volunteer, child/young person or family member, is concerned that a child or children may be at risk of harm, BTBA's child protection policy and procedures rather than this complaints policy or procedure.

We will  
seek to deal with complaints by:

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defining  
clearly what we mean by a complaint

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setting  
out a procedure that can be easily followed and understood

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making  
sure that everyone knows about the policy and procedure

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producing  
child and family friendly material explaining this policy and  
procedure

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reassuring  
people that they will not be penalised in any way for using the  
complaints procedure and that we will respond positively to any  
complaints made in good faith

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offering  
extra support to those who need help to make a complaint

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taking  
a staged approach to complaints that takes account of the level of  
seriousness and the possibility of resolution at different points

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investigating  
each complaint as objectively and fully as we reasonably can

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keeping  
the complainant informed during the course of the investigation and  
of the outcome of his/her complaint

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keeping  
clear records of complaints and of how they are resolved.

Complaints  
procedure

What do we mean by  
a complaint?

A  
complaint is a statement from someone that he/she is not happy about  
the service provided to him/her by the BTBA and would like this to be  
improved.

The  
complaint might be about:

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the  
behaviour of a staff member or volunteer (if this relates to  
allegations that someone may have harmed a child or be at risk of  
doing so, child protection procedures should be used.

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the  
behaviour of other children and young people in the group (please  
note the comment about child protection procedures above)

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the  
level of service received

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the  
type of service received

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being  
refused a service altogether

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the  
building or facilities(this will be passed to relevant authority)

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written  
information

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service  
received over the telephone (e.g. not being able to get through or  
being kept waiting)

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a  
child, young person or BTBA member feeling that he or she has been  
treated unfairly or in a way that is discriminatory

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a  
specific activity or outing

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anything  
else related to the service provided at the BTBA.

#### Procedure for making a complaint

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If  
possible, the person should discuss the complaint with the senior  
person at the event, club or tournament. If this is not possible  
(for example, the complainant does not feel comfortable speaking to  
the senior person at the event, club or tournament because the  
relationship is too difficult) the discussion should be with a BTBA  
National Bowling Council member if there is one available or the  
BTBA direct.

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The senior person at the event, club or tournament will, in the first instance, try to resolve the matter informally. This is often possible and can mean that the problem is sorted out simply and more quickly.

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If an informal solution has been tried before and has not worked, or if the complainant does not feel that informal discussions are adequate or likely to be effective, stage one of the complaints procedure should be followed.

#### Stage one

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The complainant should put their concerns in writing to their club or tournament manager or, if the club or tournament manager is the subject of the complaint, to the BTBA. If he/she needs help to do this, and a family member is not able to offer this support, help should be provided by the club or tournament manager, or, if the club or tournament manager is the subject of the complaint, by another member of staff identified by the manager.

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The club or tournament manager should give the written complaint to the BTBA within 1 working day. The BTBA should then acknowledge the complaint within two working days by sending a brief letter to:

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thank the complainant for getting in touch

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express  
regret that a complaint has been necessary

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assure  
him/her that the matter will be investigated

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set a  
provisional timescale for the investigation that is achievable but  
avoids delay as much as possible

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explain  
when the BTBA will next be in contact

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offer a  
contact name (usually the BTBA or the relevant person dealing with  
the complaint own name) in case the complainant has any questions in  
the meantime

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make  
any temporary arrangements that may be necessary pending the outcome  
of the investigation into the complaint.

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Normally  
the service to the complainant should continue as normal during the  
investigation into the complaint. If this is not possible (e.g.  
because a child has had to be excluded from an activity, or because  
the complainant does not want to use the service at that point, or  
because it would not be appropriate for the club or tournament  
manager to continue working with the child/family) then this should  
be acknowledged and temporary alternative arrangements made, if  
possible.

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If the

complaint is about a specific staff member, volunteer or other child/young person, then that person (and the parent/carer if the person is a child) should be informed within two working days (or as soon as possible) that a complaint has been made against him/her and the nature of the complaint. However, the person should not be informed if doing so would compromise anyone's safety or a police investigation.

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The club Secretary or Tournament Manager should normally be responsible for investigating a stage one complaint. The Secretary or Tournament Manager should plan the investigation according to the nature of the complaint, taking into account any witnesses or specialist opinion that should be sought. As a minimum, the complainant (and parent/carer if the complainant is a child/young person) should be interviewed. Any person who might be the subject of the complaint should also be interviewed, provided that doing so would not compromise anyone's safety or a police investigation.

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If the complaint is about a building, facilities or equipment, then this should be examined.

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If the complaint is about access to a service, the reasoning behind a decision to offer or not offer a particular service should be examined.

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If, at any point during the investigation, it appears that a criminal offence may have been committed, the matter should be reported to the police. Discussions should be held with the police about whether the investigation into the complaint can continue alongside their own enquiries.

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If it emerges at any point that a child may have been caused significant harm or may be at risk of significant harm, child protection procedures should be instigated immediately.

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The investigating Secretary or Tournament Manager should make notes of the investigation, including notes of any meetings that take place, and should write a report based on his/her findings. The report should state clearly whether the complaint is upheld or not, and should make recommendations about how the matter can be taken forward. The report should be shared with both the complainant and any specific member of staff, volunteer or other child, who may be involved. Any comments that either party may wish to make about the extent to which he/she accepts or rejects the findings of the report should be noted.

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Once a way forward has been agreed, this should be reviewed regularly

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If either the complainant or a person who is the subject of the complaint is not prepared to accept the findings of the report, they should confirm this in writing. The matter then becomes a stage two complaint.

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A complaint also progresses to stage two if it has previously (ie within the last 12 months) been handled as a stage one complaint but has resurfaced.

## Stage two

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A stage two complaint may come about for one of two reasons. It may be a complaint that has escalated from stage one because the complainant or a person who was the subject of the complaint wishes to challenge the findings from a stage one investigation. Alternatively, it may relate to matters that were investigated as a stage one complaint within the previous 12 months and have resurfaced.

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#### Stage

two complaints should be investigated either by a manager senior to the person who was investigating at stage one or by a completely independent person, not employed or acting as a volunteer for (name of group/organisation) who should be nominated by BTBA's management board. The investigation should be commissioned by the management board and findings reported back to the chair of the board.

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#### If a

complaint is to progress to stage two, the complainant (this could be the original complainant or a person who was the subject of the original complaint) should again indicate in writing that he/she wishes to complain (or complain further) and should state the reason for this.

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#### The

written statement should be presented to the chair of the board, who should then, within two working days, respond in writing to the

complainant in the same way as indicated in the stage one procedures. In addition, the chair should provide the complainant with the name of the person who will investigate the stage two complaint.

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The procedure for the investigation and sharing of the report should be similar to that outlined in the stage one procedure.

Keeping a record  
of the complaint

Regardless of whether a complaint is dealt with formally or informally, accurate notes should be made by the key worker or investigating manager of each stage of the process, including records of meetings. Copies of the final report should be given to the person making the complaint and to anyone who may be the subject of the complaint.

If the complaint leads to any disciplinary action or a referral to a statutory authority, copies of the notes made during the investigation and the report of the investigation (together with any notes relating to the outcome) should be kept confidentially on the file of any person who is the subject of the complaint.

Anonymous summary notes of any complaint should also be kept on the complaints file (insert reference number). This will assist the BTBA in the process of monitoring and learning from complaints.

This policy and procedure should be reviewed every two years

Date of  
last review:

Date of  
next review:

The  
person responsible for reviewing it is: