**Policy for Managing Complaints to the Irish Lung Fibrosis Association**

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| **Document Name: Policy for Managing Complaints to ILFA** |
| **Date Effective From: July 2022** |

**1.0 Policy Statement**

This is a statement of the Irish Lung Fibrosis Association’s (ILFA) policy for managing complaints.

* 1. **Aim of Policy**

The main aim of this policy is to have a process in place for managing and responding to complaints made to ILFA, and to use customer complaints, concerns, or suggestions to improve service quality.

**3.0** **Scope of Policy**

This policy applies to ILFA Directors, Board members, volunteers, staff, and contractors working on behalf of ILFA. All Board members must receive training regarding this policy as part of their governance training.

This policy is intended solely for complaints to ILFA about our services and/or representatives and/ or ILFA’s activities. This policy does not apply to complaints received about third party institutions, healthcare staff, or individuals other than those directly and officially associated with ILFA.

**4.0 Definitions**

**A complaint** is an expression of customer dissatisfaction or concern relating to the service or to the performance of an ILFA representative (ILFA Directors, Board members, staff, contractors, and volunteers). Complaints may be made verbally in person or by telephone, in writing, or via email or private message on social media channels.

**5.0 Responsibilities**

This policy is intended for the ILFA Directors, Board members, staff, contractors, and volunteers and they are responsible for implementing the various elements of the document.

**6.0 Procedure for processing complaints relating to ILFA**

1. All persons wishing to make a complaint must be treated with courtesy, respect, and patience.
2. ILFA Directors, Board members, staff, contractors, and volunteers must follow the procedure for receiving, handling and responding to complaints or concerns regarding ILFA, our representatives or our activities.
3. Early and effective processing of complaints is important. All complaints should be notified to the ILFA Chairman and/or Directors within 72-hours to ensure that every effort can be made to resolve the complaint and to prevent future incidents of customer dissatisfaction.
4. Names and telephone / email contact details should be requested from individuals making a complaint to ILFA to help resolve the issue, and subsequently inform them of the measures taken and the outcome.
5. Those who request that their identity remain anonymous should be informed that this will be respected as much as possible, but this may hamper the managing and resolution of the complaint.
6. If a caller is abusive, incoherent, or difficulties are encountered during the telephone conversation, this should be noted at the time of the communication. If difficulties are encountered, the person making the complaint should be asked to put their concerns in writing (email or letter).
7. Written complaints, emails and messages received via social media should be acknowledged, and the sender informed that the complaint will be addressed within 21 days of receipt.
8. All facts regarding the nature of the complaint should be established as soon as possible and all parties involved should be treated fairly and with respect.
9. If necessary, the ILFA Directors and/or Board may need to hold an extraordinary meeting to address, manage and resolve the complaint.
10. Depending on the nature and facts of the complaint, sanctions may need to be imposed on the ILFA Directors, Board members, contractors, staff, and representatives of ILFA. Sanctions may include a temporary suspension from ILFA or a permanent suspension if the Board deem this appropriate.
11. Customer comments, criticisms, or suggestions on ways to improve ILFA’s service may be useful and should be brought to the Board.
12. Copies of complaints, correspondence and all related documents should be placed in a specified complaints file upon resolution and retained for at least 5-years.

**7.0 Distribution**

This policy will be circulated to all Directors, Board members, contractors, and staff and of ILFA. New Directors, Board members, staff joining ILFA will receive training in the use of this document/policy.

**8.0 Review**

The policy will be reviewed every 3 years or if the need arises on an ad hoc basis to ensure that it is current and applicable. Policy review will be carried out for the purposes of continuous evaluation and quality improvement.

Last updated 14/7/2022

**Irish Lung Fibrosis Association**

[www.ilfa.ie](http://www.ilfa.ie)

Email: info@ilfa.ie

General Enquiries: 086 871 5264

Postal Address: PO Box 10456, Blackrock, County Dublin

Registered Address: Lavery House, Earlsfort Terrace, Dublin 2

Company registration number 367940

Registered charity number 20053437

Charitable exemption number CHY 15462

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