



**Room 101 Pelican House
144 Cambridge Heath Rd, Bethnal Green, London E1 5QJ**

COMPLAINTS POLICY AND PROCEDURE

1. Introduction

Bahay Kubo Housing Association Ltd (BKHA) is committed to delivering high-quality housing services and ensuring complaints are handled fairly, consistently, and in a timely manner. This policy aligns with the Housing Ombudsman Service Complaint Handling Code and applies to all tenants, leaseholders, service users, and stakeholders.

2. Definition of a Complaint

A complaint is an expression of dissatisfaction, however made, about the standard of service, actions, or lack of action by BKHA, its staff, or contractors that affect an individual resident or group of residents.

The following are not considered complaints under this policy:

- First-time reports of a service request (e.g., reporting a repair).
- Issues where a separate appeals process exists (e.g., tenancy or allocation appeals).

3. Principles of Complaint Handling

This policy provides tenants with a formal process to raise complaints about any aspect of the association's service.

BKHA's complaints handling is based on the following principles:

- ❖ Fairness – Complaints will be handled impartially and objectively.
- ❖ Accessibility – Residents can submit complaints through various channels: in person, by phone, email, letter, or online.
- ❖ Responsiveness – Complaints will be acknowledged and responded to within set timeframes.
- ❖ Transparency – Clear information about the complaints process and next steps will be provided.
- ❖ Accountability – Complaints data will be used to improve services.

4. Complaints Process

4.1 Informal Resolution (Stage 0)

Before making a formal complaint, residents are encouraged to discuss concerns with a Housing Officer or relevant staff member. Many issues can be resolved quickly and informally.

If unresolved, the resident may proceed to a formal complaint.

4.2 Formal Complaint – Stage 1

- Complaints can be submitted in writing or verbally through any communication channel.

- BKHA will acknowledge receipt within 5 working days, confirming the following:
 - a) the complaint stage
 - b) the complaint definition
 - c) the decision on the complaint
 - d) the reasons for any decisions made
 - e) the details of any remedy offered to put things right
 - f) details of any outstanding actions
 - g) details of how to escalate the matter to stage 2 if the individual is not satisfied with the response
- A Housing Officer or relevant manager will investigate.
- A full written response will be provided within 10 working days from acknowledgment. If more time is required, BKHA will inform the complainant with an explanation and a revised timeline.

4.3 Complaint Review – Stage 2

If dissatisfied with the Stage 1 response, the complainant may request a review within 20 working days.

- The complaint will be escalated to the Managing Director or another senior officer.
- A further investigation will be conducted.
- A final written response will be issued within 20 working days. If more time is required, BKHA will inform the complainant.
- All complaints, regardless of resolution status, will be logged and reported.
- Bahay Kubo HA must confirm the following in writing to the tenant at the completion of stage 2 in clear, plain language:
 - a. The complaint stage
 - b. The complaint definition
 - c. The decision on the complaint
 - d. The reasons for any decisions made
 - e. The details of any remedy offered to put things right;
 - f. The details of any outstanding actions; and
 - g. Details of how to escalate the matter to the Ombudsman Service if the individual remains dissatisfied.

5. Appeals Procedure

5.1 Tenants may appeal to the Management Board in writing or in person. The Director will report the complaint's handling to the Management Board.

5.2 The MB will review the complaint and issue a decision, which may include:

- a. Issuing an apology if justified.
- b. Conducting further investigation.
- c. Determining that no further action is necessary.

5.3 If further investigation is needed, it may be assigned to a subcommittee. The tenant may be invited to a meeting with the subcommittee to discuss their

complaint. The subcommittee's findings will be reviewed by the MB, and the final decision will be communicated within 7 days.

6. Tenant Representatives

At any point, tenants may have a representative assist with their complaint. This representative can be a relative, another tenant, or an external advocate, provided they have the tenant's written permission.

7. Housing Ombudsman Referral

If a complainant remains dissatisfied after Stage 3, they may escalate their complaint to the Housing Ombudsman Service:

Housing Ombudsman Service

Website: www.housing-ombudsman.org.uk

Phone: 0300 111 3000

Email: info@housing-ombudsman.org.uk

8. Self-Assessment, Reporting, and Compliance

8.1 Self-Assessment

- BKHA will self-assess its complaint handling against the Housing Ombudsman Complaint Handling Code annually.
- Self-assessment results will be reported to the Board and published on BKHA's website.

8.2 Reporting

- BKHA will maintain complaints register, recording all formal complaints, their outcomes, and actions taken.
- A quarterly complaints report will be reviewed by the Board, identifying trends and service improvements.
- A summary of complaints and learning outcomes will be included in BKHA's Annual Report to Residents.

8.3 Compliance

- BKHA will comply with the Housing Ombudsman's Complaint Handling Code and Regulator of Social Housing standards.
- Any failures in compliance will be reported to the Board and the Ombudsman.
- BKHA will co-operate fully with any Ombudsman investigations and implement recommendations promptly.

9. Learning and Continuous Improvement

- BKHA will analyse complaints data to identify recurring issues and improve service delivery.
- Staff training will be provided to enhance complaint handling.
- BKHA will publish learning outcomes from complaints to promote transparency and accountability.

10. Monitoring and Review

This policy will be reviewed every two years or sooner if required by regulatory changes or lessons learned from complaints.