

# COMPLAINTS POLICY

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This document outlines Transparency Legal Advice Centre (“TLAC”)’s formal complaints and response process. TLAC is committed to ensuring that any person using its services has the right to lodge a complaint and to have their concern addressed in a way that ensure access, equity, fairness, accountability and transparency.

## 1. Our commitment to you

TLAC is committed to ensuring that our communications and dealings with those who engage with us are of the highest possible standard. We listen and respond to your views so that we can continue to improve. TLAC welcomes both positive and negative feedback. As such, we aim to ensure that:

- it is as easy as possible to make a complaint, where the need arises;
- we treat as a complaint any clear expression of dissatisfaction with our operations which calls for a response;
- we treat every complaint seriously and confidentially;
- we handle complaints sensitively and with due consideration to confidentiality in respect of all parties involved (subject to the requirements of natural justice);
- no one bringing a complaint under this procedure will be treated less favourably or discriminated against by TLAC’s staff and volunteers;
- we respond accordingly – for example, with an explanation or apology where we have got things wrong; and that
- we monitor complaints at Board level and use them to improve our procedures and services, as appropriate.

## 2. How to make a complaint

Formal complaints can be made either directly from the complainant or via someone acting on their behalf.

In the first instance, the complaint should be sent to:

Judy O’Loan, Managing Solicitor at Transparency Legal Advice Centre, Floor 3, 69 Middle Abbey Street, Dublin 1 or [joloan@transparencylegal.ie](mailto:joloan@transparencylegal.ie)

Please provide us with contact details so that we can respond to you.

## 3. If the complaint is about:

- A staff member – the complaint will normally be dealt with by the staff member’s line manager;
- The Managing Solicitor – the complaint will normally be dealt with by the Chairperson of our Board of Directors.

## 4. What happens next?

We will ordinarily acknowledge your complaint within 7 days and do everything we can to resolve it with 21 days. If this is not possible, we will explain why and provide you with a new timescale.

All complaints will be logged in our 'Complaints Register' and tracked until they are resolved. The Complaints Register is reviewed by the Board of Directors annually.

#### **5. What happens if you are still unhappy?**

If you are not happy with our response, you are invited to contact the Chairperson of our Board of Directors, Gavin Elliott, who will ensure that your appeal is considered at Board level.

Our Chairperson can be contacted at [elliott.gavin@gmail.com](mailto:elliott.gavin@gmail.com)

#### **6. Situations where TLAC will stop responding to a complaint**

No complaint will be ignored and we will treat everyone who makes a complaint with courtesy and respect. In return, we expect complainants to raise their complaints fairly and appropriately. In cases where complainants harass staff, behave abusively or unreasonably pursue their complaint, we reserve the right to withdraw our investigation of their complaint.

In all such instances, the complainant will be informed by the Managing Solicitor that we do not propose to engage further with the complaint.

***Note: This policy does not apply to TLAC's staff or volunteers, who should instead follow the grievances procedure in the employee handbook.***