

COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

Owner:	HR Department
Implemented:	2022
To be reviewed:	3 years
Review dates:	June 2026
Details of reviews	June 2026: • Full review and update of language and grammar.
Related documents:	Grievance Procedure Whistleblowing Policy

Introduction

Church Army is committed to being an organisation that supports and empowers those most in need, working through partnership and collaboration. We aim to promote fairness and maintain good order in the interest of the organisation, its employees, and those it serves.

We recognise that, at times, things can go wrong and individuals may be dissatisfied with our actions or services. We are committed to investigating complaints promptly, fairly and to putting things right where appropriate.

We welcome feedback and complaints as an opportunity to learn and improve. We will seek to resolve concerns as quickly as possible and will use any lessons learned to strengthen our working practices.

Scope

This procedure enables individuals outside of Church Army to raise a complaint or concern relating to the actions or behaviour of the organisation or those acting on its behalf. Examples include:

- Concerns about the actions of the organisation
- Concerns about a member of the Church Army Network¹
- Concerns about a member of staff
- Concerns about a consultant or contractor working on behalf of Church Army

Exclusions

Complaints raised by Evangelists in Training should be raised using the procedure set out in the Training Handbook.

Employees should use the Grievance Procedure or the Whistleblowing Policy.

¹ Previously known as Church Army Mission Community (CAMC)

Principles

- All complaints will be taken seriously, whether received by email, letter or phone.
- Complainants will be always treated with courtesy and fairness. We ask that the same respect is shown to our staff.
- Complaints will be handled confidentially and only shared with those who need to be involved.
- Complaints will be dealt with as quickly as possible, within reasonable timeframes and in a professional, sensitive and straightforward way.
- Complainants are encouraged to raise issues as they arise, as delays can make investigation more difficult.
- Church Army reserves the right not to consider a complaint if it is raised more than six months after the incident.
- We may take reasonable action where a complainant's behaviour is unreasonable or persistently disruptive. This may include restricting contact by phone or other means of communication, requiring the presence of witnesses, or declining to consider further complaints.

How to Complain

Informal Process

Where possible concerns should be resolved informally in the first instance.

Please contact us using the details below. Upon receipt of your complaint, a manager will contact you to discuss the matter with you.

A complaint may be handled informally where:

- There is an agreed way forward to resolve the problem within 10 working days, and / or
- A formal investigation is not required.

Formal Procedure

If your concern cannot be resolved informally or is of a serious or complex nature, you may submit a formal complaint.

You should:

- Put your complaint in writing
- Clearly describe what you are complaining about.
- Explain why you think the organisation is at fault
- State the outcome you are seeking

Formal complaints will be considered by a senior manager who had had no prior involvement in the matter.

We will:

- Acknowledge receipt of your complaint
- Outline the process and provide an estimated timeframe
- Keep you informed where appropriate

Once a decision has been made, you will receive a written response setting out:

- The outcome of the complaint in writing.
- Any actions to be taken (If upheld), or
- The reason for the decision (if not upheld)

Please note: due to data protection legislation and confidentiality, where a complaint involves staff disciplinary matters, we may only confirm that appropriate action has been taken in line with internal procedures

Who to Complain to?

You should raise your concern in writing with either:

Head of HR – Denise Ambrose

denise.ambrose@churcharmy.org

Safeguarding Lead – Rob Greensmith

rob.greensmith@churcharmy.org

Chief Operating Officer – Sam Crawford

sam.crawford@churcharmy.org

Church Army
Pennine Five Campus
Block 5, Level 7
41 Silver Street Head
Sheffield
S1 2DY

If you remain dissatisfied

If you remain dissatisfied after the formal stage, you may request a final review.

To request a final review, you should:

- Contact the reviewing manager named in the formal response
- Explain why you are dissatisfied with the outcome
- Outline the outcome you are seeking

This is the final stage of Church Army's complaints procedure. Where applicable, we will advise you of any relevant external review bodies (e.g. the Information Commissioner's Office)

Remedies

If the complaint is upheld, we will take reasonable and proportionate steps to put things right. This may include changes to our processes, practices or service delivery.

We will consider the outcome sought by the complainant where appropriate.

Persistent Complaints

- Complaints that have already been fully investigated will not be reopened unless significant new evidence is provided
- Anonymous complaints will be considered where possible, although there may be limitations in how fully they can be investigated.
- Persistent or vexatious complaints may result in reasonable restrictions on communication or further investigation.
- Complaints raised by an employee of Church Army about their employment should be raised using Church Army's Grievance Policy.

Data Protection

Church Army will keep a record of complaints to improve services and identify trends.

Information gathered during complaints and investigations:

- Is held securely
- Is only accessed by those involved in the process
- Is used solely for managing the complaint and any related procedures

Where meetings are recorded (in person or remotely), we will obtain consent from all participants.

There may be circumstances where we cannot fully disclose information due to legal or data protection obligations, including:

- Safeguarding of adults or children
- Staff disciplinary processes
- Police or criminal investigations
- Ongoing legal proceedings

Any inappropriate access or disclosure of data will be treated as a data breach and handled under the organisation's Data Protection Policy.