

COMPLAINTS POLICY

PRAGYA

This policy was last updated/ reviewed 1/4/2019

The policy is to be reviewed on 1/4/2020

1. Introduction

- 1.1 This policy lays down Pragma's principles and commitments regarding dealing with complaints and applies to all members of Pragma (including all staff, trustees, consultants, interns, volunteers) and all associates of Pragma (including all vendors, supporters, partners, suppliers).
- 1.2 Pragma is committed to implement projects in a holistic manner maintaining the highest standards of ethics, quality, and sensitivity with complete respect to the contextual factors.
- 1.3 Pragma Board of Trustees takes seriously its responsibility towards the community members that we work with and is determined to follow international best practice to implement the projects.
- 1.4 The aims of this policy are:
 - 1.4.1 To provide a fair complaints procedure which is clear and easy to use for anyone wishing to make a complaint.
 - 1.4.2 To publicise the existence of the complaints procedure so that people know how to contact Pragma to make a complaint.
 - 1.4.3 To ensure that everyone at Pragma knows the way a complaint is received and processed.
 - 1.4.4 To ensure that all complaints are investigated fairly and within the specified timelines.
 - 1.4.5 To ensure that complaints are, wherever possible, resolved and that relationships are restored.
 - 1.4.6 To record the complaint and take the learning that would help Pragma to improve the processes and systems.

2. Definitions

- 2.1 Complaint: A complaint is any expression of dissatisfaction, whether justified or not, about any aspect of the functioning of Pragma and covers the partners and associates involved in the delivery of the projects. This policy does not cover staff grievances and all such concerns should be referred to the designated person for HR matters.
- 2.2 Complainant: Complaints may come from any individual, volunteer or organisation including the general public if something is perceived to be improper. A complaint may be received verbally, by phone, by email or by post.
- 2.3 Designated Person: A senior person is designated in each office who is responsible for:
 - 2.3.1 Providing report to the Board of Trustees, detailing any changes necessary to the policy and procedures; relevant programmatic issues, number and type of incidents/cases, and
 - 2.3.2 Keeping the staff up-to-date with any developments on this policy, and to organise trainings if required.

3. Implementation

- 3.1 Contact Details for Complaints: Written complaints may be sent to Pragya office address. Verbal complaints may be made by phone, and email may be sent to complaints@pragya.org
- 3.2 Receiving Complaints: Complaints may arrive through the above channels or through any other mode that the complainant may have, such as social media. Complaints received by telephone or in person need to be recorded and emailed to complaints@pragya.org
- 3.3 Recording complaints: The person who receives a complaint through phone or in person should:
 - 3.3.1 Write down the facts of the complaint
 - 3.3.2 Take the complainant's name, address and telephone number
 - 3.3.3 Acknowledge the complaint and inform the designated person in Pragya about the same.
- 3.4 Processing Complaints:
 - 3.4.1 Stage one: A complaint is best resolved by the person responsible for the issue being complained about. If the complaint has been received by that person, they may be able to resolve it swiftly and should do so if possible and appropriate. Whether or not the complaint has been resolved, the complaint information should be emailed to the designated email address. On receiving the complaint, the designated head of the unit records it in the complaints Logbook. **She/he has to delegate an appropriate person to investigate it and to take appropriate action.** If the complaint relates to a specific person, the person should be informed and given a fair opportunity to respond. Ideally complainants should receive a definitive reply within a month. If this is not possible because for example, an investigation has not been fully completed, a progress report should be sent with an indication of when a full reply will be given. Whether the complaint is justified or not, the reply to the complainant should describe the action taken to investigate the complaint, the conclusions from the investigation, and any action taken as a result of the complaint.
 - 3.4.2 Stage Two: If the complainant feels that the problem has not been satisfactorily resolved at Stage One, they can request that the complaint is reviewed at Board level. At this stage, the complaint will be passed to the Board of Trustees. The request for Board level review should be acknowledged within five working days of receiving it. The acknowledgement should say who will deal with the case and when the complainant can expect a reply. The Board of Trustees may investigate the facts of the case themselves or delegate a suitably senior person to do so. This may involve reviewing the paperwork of the case and speaking with the person who dealt with the complaint at Stage One. If the complaint relates to a specific person, they should be informed and given a further opportunity to respond. Whether the complaint is upheld or not, the reply to the complainant should describe the action taken to investigate the complaint, the conclusions from the investigation, and any action taken as a result of the complaint. The decision taken at this stage is final, unless the Board decides it is appropriate to seek external assistance with resolution.
 - 3.4.3 External Stage: As Pragya is a registered charity, the complainant may choose to lodge the complaint with the statutory authorities. In that case the organization will share all the details of the internal investigation with the statutory authorities. The Chair of the Board of Trustees may also refer the complaint to the relevant statutory authority in case the Board decides to do so.
 - 3.4.4 Variation of the Complaints Procedure: The Board may vary the process for good reason. This may be necessary to avoid a conflict of interest, for example, a complaint about the Head of the unit should not also have the same person involved as a person leading a review.
 - 3.4.5 Monitoring and Learning from Complaints: Complaints have to be reviewed and suitable steps in

terms of changes in processes and systems have to be implemented to ensure that no repeat happens.

4. Confidentiality

- 4.1 As part of this policy, it is essential to respect the need for confidentiality where any lack of confidentiality may have negative effects for the complainant. In responding to issues and concerns regarding the complaint, staff must exercise extreme caution in protecting information and must pass on information to the relevant staff member/authority only on a need to know basis.

5. Associations / Partnerships

- 5.1 Pragma will educate the partners on the need to have a platform for receiving and processing complaints, in case they do not have this.

6. Policy Review

- 6.1 The Board of Trustees of Pragma is responsible for ensuring the annual review of this policy.