



ABC BANKING CORPORATION LTD

Complaints Handling Policy and Procedures

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Document Review and Approval History

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SIGN OFF SHEET

HEAD OF COMPLIANCE:.....
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1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Purpose

ABC Banking Corporation Ltd (hereafter referred to as the “bank”) is committed to continually improve the service it provides to its customers. It aims to always put its customers first and deliver a best-in-class customer service experience. This customer Complaints Handling Policy is designed to ensure that complaints are dealt with efficiently, fairly and effectively.

The policy aims to:

- Provide a framework for the bank’s staff to implement when handling complaints thereby ensuring adherence to the Guideline on Complaints Handling Policy and Procedures applicable to banks and Non-Bank Deposit taking Institutions licensed by the Bank of Mauritius dated 07 October 2019 and changes brought by the Finance (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 2021
- Provide employees with guidance in dealing with complaints efficiently, fairly, effectively and in a timely manner.
- Ensure consistency within the bank in handling and resolving complaints from customers.
- Assist the bank in its commitment to providing quality products and customer service;
- Support the provision of the highest possible quality service to our customers.
- Increase the level of customer satisfaction; and
- Enhance our relationship with our customers.

1.2 Definition of a Complaint

The Bank of Mauritius has in its Guideline on Complaint Handling Procedures defined “complaint” as any act or omission of an institution made within a period of 7 years as from the date thereof, which causes a customer to be aggrieved.

1.3 Importance of Handling Complaints

Customer complaints may be the first indication of serious irregularities, fraud, mistakes, services or procedural deficiencies as well as potential defection to competitors. Complaints are an important way for the management of the bank to be accountable to its stakeholders as well as providing valuable prompts to review organisational effectiveness and the conduct of people that work within and for it. Cognisant of same, the bank has put in place a strong and effective

complaint handling policy and requires that all employees strictly comply with same.

2.0 GUIDING PRINCIPLES OF COMPLAINT HANDLING

(a) All employees receiving customer complaints must follow the principles outlined below:

- Listen and understand the customer regardless of the nature of the complaint.
- Acknowledge and, where relevant, apologize for any inconvenience the customer may have experienced.
- Take ownership of the report being made by the customer and actions arising from such report. Always strive to the best of their ability to resolve a customer complaint.
- Never refuse or delay clients (without a reasonable cause) should they wish to register the complaint; and
- Treat complaints fairly and objectively.

(b) Complaints made by the relatives or friends of staff members must be handled completely independently of the staff member with whom they have the relationship.

(c) The bank will provide a copy of the Complaints Handling Policy & Procedures to its customers free of charge and upon request. This procedure will be available on the bank's website and available to whoever wishes to take cognizance. For new customers, a paragraph on Complaints Handling Policy & Procedures has been inserted into their terms and conditions informing them of the bank's Complaints handling Policy and Procedures and also where to find them.

(d) Except as provided for in section 57(6) of the Banking Act, the bank should not give a different treatment or impose fees on accounts which have remained inactive in the bank, whether held in the name of a minor or any other person until the period of seven years has been reached where it should be treated as abandoned funds.

3.0 APPOINTMENT OF COMPLAINTS OFFICER

In line with Section 96A of the Banking Act 2004 and Section 12.2 of the Guideline on Complaints Handling Policy and Procedures of the Office of the Ombudsperson for Financial Services (OFS) and with a view to enhance the communication with the OFS, the bank has appointed a complaints officer to deal with complaints and grievances from customers.

As required, the bank will notify the Ombudsperson for Financial Services as soon as reasonably practicable of any subsequent change with regard to the complaint's Officer.

4.0 ESTABLISHMENT OF A COMPLAINTS OWNER

Complaint Handling or Investigation

1. Complaints may be received verbally or in writing, at the counters, by letter, by telephone, or by mail.
2. After having received and recorded the complaint, the employee should send to the Complaint Officer the details of the complaint, regardless of whether the complaint has been resolved or not. It is also advisable for heads of department to keep a track of all complaints that may have been raised by customers.
3. The staff receiving the complaint should either handle the matter or pass it to the relevant Relationship Manager. In the latter case, such transmission should be done on the same day.
4. The staff handling the complaint should ensure that all complaints are investigated within the set deadline – See section 5 below.
5. The department where the relationship is based (i.e. Corporate Banking, International Banking, Private Banking, Retail Sales, Branch) is the complaints owner. It is acknowledged that the complaint may not relate to the service delivered by the RM – for instance, where the complaint relates to offer letters, payments, etc. In such cases, the RM will be expected to liaise with the department concerned (CAD, Ops, etc) to resolve the complaint.
6. Staff may seek the help of the Complaints Officer for any Complaints related issue. The latter, as well as the department concerned, has the responsibility to ensure that the complaint is dealt with in a timely manner.

The Complaints handling policy & Procedure is binding on the bank and all of its staff.

In the event that the complaint may not be handled fairly because the complaint owner caused complaint, the Line Manager/Head of Department can either designate another independent complaint owner or otherwise

handle the complaint directly.

Heads of Departments/Line Managers should ensure that complaints assigned to their departments for resolution are dealt with in a timely manner and as far as possible to the satisfaction of the bank's customers.

In the circumstances the complaint is still not resolved, the matter should be referred to the Complaints Officer who will then drive the issue as per procedures.

Regarding complaints received from the Bank of Mauritius or from the Ombudsperson for Financial Services, it will be the responsibility of the

Complaints Officer who will need to notify the department concerned in order to deal with the matter and respond to the Authorities as appropriate in a timely manner.

Contact Customer

The RM will have the primary responsibility for interacting with the customer to reply and seek complaint resolution.

5.0 TIME LIMITS FOR DEALING WITH COMPLAINTS

- Complaints should be resolved preferably at the first point of contact and on the spot.

The staff handling the complaint should, except where the complaint has been made verbally (walk-in or over the phone), send a written acknowledgement of the complaint within two working days of its receipt, giving the name, job title and contact details of the person handling the complaint. For a walk-in complaint or phone complaint, the Walk-In/ Phone Complaints Form should be duly filed in and executed within the prescribed time frame. In all cases, the Complaints Officer should be kept in the loop.

In the event that the employee is unable to resolve a complaint received verbally (walk-in or over the phone) within two working days, the complaints Officer should be informed immediately.

A written reply containing the decision of the financial institution to the complainant should, as prescribed in the law, be sent to the complainant within 10 days as from the date the complaint is received by the bank covering all points raised by the customer advising on corrective action(s) taken for complaints resolution. That reply should be vetted and signed off by the Complaints Officer. Complainants should be informed that in case they are still aggrieved by the decision provided to them by the bank, or that they do not receive a reply from the bank within 10 days as from the date of their complaint, they may refer their complaint to the Office of the Ombudsperson to be dealt with in the manner the Office considers appropriate.

A regular assurance exercise will be undertaken by the internal auditor which will aim at examining whether the procedures are operating effectively.

6.0 ESCALATION PROCESS

All complaints need to be escalated to the Line Manager/Head of Department for closure under copy to the complaints officer or the complaints Officer. All unresolved complaints must be reported to Senior Management if not resolved. Typical examples of such complaints include:

- Complaints are so severe that customers cannot be pacified and/or might be escalated to Senior Management.
- Customer insists on speaking with senior executives such as Head of department/General Manager/Managing Director.
- Compensation amount or adjustment for error exceeds the entitled limit.
- The customer is dissatisfied with the performance of the complaint owner.
- Final result for handling complaint is closed as 'Disputed' status.
- Complaint remains unresolved after 7 working days.
- Complaint relates to fraud or irregularity, or it is in doubt.
- Complaint might result in law suits.
- Complaint due to defects in our processing or provision in respect of regulation.
- Complaint which might be raised to external regulators.
- Complaint which might come to public knowledge via the media; and
- *Complaint due to mis-representation sale.

*The definition of misrepresentative is the sale of a product or service to a customer without regard to customer's interests and also includes the provision of inaccurate or misleading information about the bank, its product or service, which exposed the bank to regulatory penalties, reputation damage and legal action by customers.

The information provided to Senior Management should include at least the following: -

- Statistics on the volume and type of complaints received.

- How well does the internal complaint management system meet prescribed performance standards.
- The level of customer satisfaction.
- Whether recurrent problems are being identified and corrected

7.0 OMBUDSPERSON FOR FINANCIAL SERVICES

The Ombudsperson for Financial Services Act 2018 provides for the establishment of the Office of the Ombudsperson for Financial Services. With a view to giving a better protection to customers of financial services, the Ombudsperson for Financial Services will receive and deal with complaints from customers of financial services against financial institutions and may make an award for compensation, where appropriate, and give such directives as he may determine to financial institutions.

The following procedures are to be followed for the making of a complaint to the Office of Ombudsperson for Financial Services.

Step 1: A complainant should first make his complaint to his financial institution.

Step 2: If after having made his complaint to the financial institution, the complainant still feels aggrieved by the decision of the financial institution or he does not receive a reply to his complaint after a period of 10 days as from the date the complaint was made, he may then lodge a complaint in writing to the Office of Ombudsperson for Financial Services.

Step 3: The complaint to the Office of Ombudsperson for Financial Services should be duly accompanied by the following: -

- the name and address of the complainant.
- the name and address of the financial institution against which the complaint was made.
- the nature of the complaint and the facts and circumstances giving rise to the complaint.
- the relief sought.
- a written declaration to the effect that the complaint was made to his financial institution by registered post, with advice of delivery, and that he has sufficient interest in the subject matter of the complaint.
- a declaration as to whether the financial institution replied to the complaint.
- a copy of the reply, if any, from the relevant financial institution to which the complaint was made; and
- copies of the documents on which he proposes to rely.

8.0 RECORD KEEPING

All complaints should be logged in by the Complaints officer., showing the details as shown at **Annex 1**. The details will be used to complete the quarterly return that need to be submitted to the Bank of Mauritius on XBRL (SUP 1400) and to the Ombudsperson for Financial Services, as appropriate

The bank shall record and retain details of complaints for at least a period of 7 years as from the date of their receipt.

The details to be recorded should include:

- a) the complainant's name.
- b) the substance of the complaint.
- c) any correspondence between the institution concerned and the complainant, including the manner in which the complaint was resolved and details of any redress offered by the financial institution concerned; and
- d) Whether any alleged problem, if substantiated, was rectified and the manner in which this was done.

The records should be kept in a convenient and accessible form to facilitate discharge by the Ombudsperson or its Officers of its powers under section 5 (3A) of the Ombudsperson for Financial Services Act 2018.

9.0 REGULATORY REPORTING

In line with Section 8 and sub-section 26 of the Bank of Mauritius Guideline on Complaints Handling Procedures, the bank will provide the Bank of Mauritius, on a quarterly basis, with information on complaints as per format in **Annexure 1**.

The Ombudsperson of Financial Services may from time to time request the bank to provide data on Complaints.

10.0 REVIEW OF POLICY

The policy shall be reviewed annually by the Complaints Officer.

Any change or modification brought to the policy shall be approved at the Executive Committee (EXCO) and thereafter tabled at the Risk Management Committee and Board for ratification.

Annexure 1

COMPLAINTS REGISTER

QUARTER (... ..)

Date of Complaint	Mode of Complaint [E-Mail/Fax/P phone/Walk-In]	Customer Name	Customer Address	Date on which complaint was resolved	Turnaround time (Days)	Name of employee logging ticket	Name of employee to whom the ticket has been assigned for resolving	Owner of the Complaint	Department responsible for resolving the complaint	Nature of Complaint	Details of Complaint	Resolved (Please add details on Nature of Resolution and attach the email received by client)	Unresolved [Reasons]

