

Complaints Policy

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Rape Crisis England & Wales Complaints Policy

1. Principles

- 1.1. Rape Crisis England & Wales (RCEW) is committed to listening to the needs and views of our members, supporters and service users.
- 1.2. We recognise that there may be times when our staff, trustees, or third parties working on our behalf make mistakes or get things wrong. Please let us know if this has happened so we can deal with the issue.
- 1.3. Where this happens and we receive a complaint, we will deal with it in a professional and timely way. We will always take your complaint seriously, record it, respond in a timely manner, and take action if appropriate.
- 1.4. We will communicate with you until the issue has been resolved, as outlined in this policy.

2. Scope of this policy

- 2.1. Our policy covers complaints about RCEW, in particular:
 - 2.1.1. The standard of the services RCEW provides
 - 2.1.2. The behaviour of RCEW staff, trustees and contracted third parties.
- 2.2. Our complaints policy does not cover:
 - 2.2.1. Comments or dissatisfaction about our policies or policy decisions
 - 2.2.2. Matters that have already been fully investigated through this complaints procedure
 - 2.2.3. Anonymous complaints
 - 2.2.4. Complaints about organisations that are not member centres of RCEW.
- 2.3. Complaints about member centres of RCEW:
 - 2.3.1 All of our member Rape Crisis Centres are autonomous organisations with their own ways of working and policies and procedures
 - 2.3.2 Any complaints about a member Rape Crisis Centre must be sent to that centre to be addressed by their own complaints policy and procedure
 - 2.3.3 A list of current member centres can be found here:
rapecrisis.org.uk/get-help/find-a-rape-crisis-centre/

2.3.4 If you are not satisfied with the process or outcome of the member organisation's investigation, you may complain to RCEW once the internal complaints process in the member centre has been completed. A complaint about a member organisation can only be dealt with if it involves a breach by the member organisation of the terms of its' RCEW membership.

2.3.5 Anyone who feels that a complaint they have made to a RCEW member organisation has not been dealt with adequately and that the member may have breached their terms of membership of RCEW, should follow the procedure below.

2.3.6 Occasionally, we receive complaints about organisations which are no longer operational or which were previously, but are now no longer a member of RCEW. When this happens, there are unfortunately no steps that can be taken to find a resolution. If your complaint is received in circumstances such as this, we will communicate clearly to you about this, and seek to listen to your experiences.

2.4. There is no time limit on when complaints can be lodged. For complaints about incidents which happened many years ago, it may be difficult to find a resolution, however we are committed to supporting women to have their voices heard wherever possible.

2.5. All complaints will be dealt with in line with our Confidentiality and Equal Opportunities policies.

2.6. We may refuse to investigate or further investigate complaints if they either:
Fall under matters excluded from the complaints procedure (listed above at Section 2.2), or: the complaint is deemed to be vexatious or habitual.

3. Making a complaint about Rape Crisis England & Wales

3.1. If the complaint can be dealt with informally, then please raise the issue by contacting the person responsible directly.

3.2. If the complaint is of a more serious nature, or you feel like you cannot approach the person directly, you may wish to make a formal complaint.

3.3. To make a formal complaint, you should:

3.3.1. Email rcewinfo@rapecrisis.org.uk with your name, contact details, and details of your complaint

Or

3.3.2. Write to us at Rape Crisis England & Wales, Suite E4, Joseph's Well, Hanover Walk, Leeds, LS3 1AB with your name, contact details, and details of your complaint

- 3.3.3. We can be contacted using the details above if you need help putting your complaint into writing.
- 3.4. We will acknowledge all formal complaints within 5 working days upon receipt.
- 3.5. All complaints will be recorded on the RCEW complaints register.
- 3.6. We aim to respond to all complaints within 21 working days. If, due to the complexity of the complaint or availability of interviewees etc., we require longer, we will let you know.
- 3.7. We will regularly report to the RCEW Board of Trustees on the number and theme/nature of any complaints received, including if this has resulted in any changes to services or policies.
- 3.8. If you are unhappy with our response to your complaint, you may contact the Charity Commission directly.
- 3.9. The number of complaints regarding any fundraising activity will be included in RCEW's annual report.

4. Making a complaint about a member Rape Crisis Centre

- 4.1. If you want to make a complaint about a member Rape Crisis Centre, in the first instance you should refer to that Centre's own complaints policy and procedure – visit rapecrisis.org.uk/get-help/find-a-rape-crisis-centre/ to find contact details.
- 4.2. If you are not satisfied with the process or outcome of the member Rape Crisis Centre's investigation, you may complain to RCEW once the internal complaints process in the member centre has been completed. A complaint can only be dealt with if it involves a breach by the member organisation of the terms of its' RCEW membership.
- 4.3. Anyone who feels that a complaint they have made to a RCEW member organisation has not been dealt with adequately, that the member may have breached their terms of membership of RCEW, and wishes to make a complaint to RCEW about this should:
 - 4.3.1. Email rcewinfo@rapecrisis.org.uk with your name, contact details, and details of your complaint including:
 - the response from the member Rape Crisis Centre

- the aspect(s) of the terms of RCEW membership that the complainant feels have been breached

Or

- 4.3.2. Write to us at Rape Crisis England & Wales, Suite E4, Joseph's Well, Hanover Walk, Leeds, LS3 1AB with your name, contact details, and details of your complaint including:
- the response from the member Rape Crisis Centre
 - the aspect(s) of the terms of RCEW membership that the complainant feels have been breached.
- 4.3.3. We can be contacted using the details above if you need help putting your complaint into writing.
- 4.4. We will acknowledge all formal complaints within 5 working days upon receipt.
- 4.5. All complaints will be recorded on the RCEW complaints register.
- 4.6. We will aim to investigate and respond to any complaint received within 21 working days. If, due to the complexity of the complaint, we require longer than this, we will let you know.
- 4.7. We will inform the member Rape Crisis Centre of the complaint.
- 4.8. If the complaint is of a serious nature, you can contact the Charity Commission or police, if appropriate.
- 4.9. Where the complaint is of a serious nature, we will also inform the RCEW Board of Trustees. Depending on the outcome of the complaint, the Board of Trustees can, under the Memorandum and Articles of Rape Crisis England & Wales, allow for membership to be terminated in extreme/serious circumstances.