

## GRIEVANCE REDRESSAL POLICY

### 1. Introduction

In the present scenario of competitive banking, excellence in customer service is the most important tool for sustained business growth. Customer complaints are part of the business life of any corporate entity. This is more so for banks because banks are service organizations. As a service organization, customer service and customer satisfaction should be the prime concern of any bank. The bank believes that providing prompt and efficient service is essential not only to attract new customers, but also to retain existing ones. This policy document aims at minimizing instances of customer complaints and grievances through proper service delivery and review mechanism and to ensure prompt redressal of customer complaints and grievances. The review mechanism should help in identifying shortcomings in product features and service delivery. The bank's policy on grievance redressal follows the under noted principles.

- Customers be treated fairly at all times
- Complaints raised by customers are dealt with courtesy and on time.
- Customers are fully informed of avenues to escalate their complaints /grievances within the organization and their rights to alternative remedy, if they are not fully satisfied with the response of the bank to their complaints.
- Bank will treat all complaints efficiently and fairly as they can damage the bank's reputation and business if handled otherwise.
- The bank employees must work in good faith and without prejudice to the interests of the customer.

Bank has evolved this policy to ensure that grievance redressal mechanism is meaningful and effective. The policy also covers redressal of complaints emanating from rural areas relating to financial assistance to priority sector sponsored programmers.

The policy document would be made available at all branches and to employees. The concerned employees will be made aware about the Complaint handling process.

## **1.1 The customer complaint arises due to:**

- The attitudinal aspects in dealing with customers.
- Inadequacy of the functions /arrangements made available to the customers or gaps in standards of services expected and actual services rendered.

The customer is having full right to register his complaint if he is not satisfied with the services provided by the bank. He can give his complaint in writing, orally or over telephone, Email and through letters. *The complaints / appeal received through any channel has to be acknowledged immediately.* If customer's complaint is not resolved within given time or if he is not satisfied with the solution provided by the bank, he can approach Banking Ombudsman with his complaint or other legal avenues available for grievance redressal.

The complaints received from multiple channels should be invariably lodged into a common digital platform in order to have an integrated information system for customer grievances which should have the capability of ensuring that these grievances are resolved expeditiously and monitored seamlessly as per the standardized public grievance redress system.

## **2. Internal Machinery to handle Customer complaints/ grievances**

### **2.1 Customer Service Committee of the Board**

This sub-committee of the Board would be responsible for formulation of a Comprehensive Deposit Policy incorporating the issues such as the treatment of death of a depositor for operations of his account, the product approval process and the annual survey of depositor satisfaction and the tri-ennial audit of such services. The Committee would also examine any other issues having a bearing on the quality of customer service rendered. This Committee would also review the functioning of Standing Committee on Customer Service.

### **2.2 Standing Committee on Customer Service**

The Standing Committee on Customer Service will be chaired by the Managing Director/Executive Director of the bank. Besides two to three senior executives of the bank, the committee includes two or three eminent non-executives drawn from the public as members. The committee would have the following functions.

- Evaluate feed-back on quality of customer service received from various quarters. The committee would also review comments/feed-back on customer service and implementation of commitments in the Code of Bank's Commitments to Customers received from BCSBI.

- The Committee would be responsible to ensure that all regulatory instructions regarding customer service are followed by the bank. Towards this, the committee would obtain necessary feed-back from zonal/regional managers/ functional heads.
- The committee also would consider unresolved complaints/grievances referred to it by functional heads responsible for redressal and offer their advice.
- The committee would submit report on its performance to the customer service committee of the board at quarterly intervals.
- The complaints regarding non-compliance with the Code will be dealt with by Code Compliance Officers at Zonal Offices for corrective steps. The Zonal Heads, who are the Code Compliance Officers in the Zone, need to periodically report to the Nodal Officer at Head Office who in turn will apprise such instances to the Standing Committee on Customer Service.

### **2.3 Nodal Officer and other designated Officials to handle complaints and grievances**

Bank has *nominated* a Nodal Officer of the rank of General Manager *at its Head Office* who will be responsible for the implementation of customer service and complaint handling for the entire bank. The bank has also *nominated* Customer Relation Officer at Zonal Offices to handle complaint grievances in respect of branches *falling* under their control. The names and contact details of Nodal Officers are displayed on the branch Notice Board.

### **2.3 Internal Ombudsman**

Internal Ombudsman of the rank of a Retired General Manager or Retired Deputy General Manager of another Bank has been appointed to strengthen the internal grievance redressal mechanism and he shall act as Internal Ombudsman to resolve the disputes raised by the customers and helps in minimizing the number of cases referred to Ombudsman.

**3.** *The Bank shall provide the following in the Customer Guide supplied to all branches besides providing information/details on other Customer Centric matters in the guide.*

- Appropriate arrangement for receiving complaints and suggestions.
- The name, address and contact number of Nodal Officer(s)
- Contact details of Banking Ombudsman of the area
- Contact details of Chief Grievance Redressal Officer
- Code of bank's commitments to customers/Fair Practice code.

#### **4. Resolution of Grievances:**

Branch Manager is responsible for the resolution of complaints/ grievances in respect of customer's service by the branch. He would be responsible for ensuring closure of all complaints received at the branches. It is his foremost duty to see that the complaint should be resolved completely to the customer's satisfaction and if the customer is not satisfied, then he should be provided with alternate avenues to escalate the issue. If the branch manager feels that it is not possible at his level to solve the problem he can refer the case to Zonal Office for guidance.

Similarly, if Zonal office finds that they are not able to solve the problem such cases may be referred to the Circle Office for guidance. Likewise, if Circle Office finds that they are not able to solve the problem such cases may be referred to Head Office for Guidance. It should be mentioned clearly in the final letter that if the customer is not happy with the resolution of the complaint, he / she can refer the grievance to the Banking Ombudsman.

#### **Time frame for resolution of grievances:**

The Bank has set the following time frame for resolution of grievances:

- a) Branches: Within 7 working days.
- b) Zonal Offices: Within 15 working days.
- c) Circle Offices : Within 21 working days.
- d) Head Office: Within 30 working days.

All complaints which are not redressed to the satisfaction of the complainant or within the specified time frame and rejected/partially accepted complaints shall be escalated to Internal Ombudsman and only after obtaining his concurrence a final decision will be conveyed to the complainant.

However, the above time limit is not applicable for complaints which involve detailed investigation, liaison with various agencies such as CBI, Enforcement Directorate, Police Dept. etc.

Branch must send action taken report to zonal office on complaints received at the end of every month. Zonal Offices to submit the consolidated report to the Head Office at the end of every month, through Circle Office.

#### **5 Role of Circle Office:**

- 1 To monitor complaints received and resolved in the Circle.
- 2 The Circle Office should endeavor to achieve nil pendency of complaints received keeping in view the time frame as per Grievance Redressal Policy.

#### **6. Interaction with customers**

The bank recognizes that customer's expectation/ requirement/grievances can be better appreciated through personal interaction with customers by bank's staff. Structured customer meets, say once in a quarter will give a message to the customers that the bank cares for them and values their feed back/suggestions for improvement in customer service. Many of the complaints arise on account of lack of awareness among customers about bank services and such interactions will help the customers appreciate banking services better. As for the bank the feed back from customers would be valuable input for revising its product and services to meet customer requirements.

## **7. Sensitizing operating staff on handling complaints**

Staff should be properly trained for handling complaints. *Bank is* dealing with people and hence difference of opinion and areas of friction can arise. With an open mind and a smile on the face, *the Bank staff* should be able to win the customer's confidence. It would be the responsibility of the Nodal Officer to ensure that internal machinery for handling complaints/grievances operates smoothly and efficiently at all levels. He should give feed back on training needs of staff at various levels to the HRD & Training Division.

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