



The Liberal Jewish Synagogue

Complaints Policy and Procedure

The Liberal Jewish Synagogue is committed to being a warm, welcoming and compassionate community and to having transparent and responsible governance of the congregation and financial accountability by its trustees. Therefore, we aim to ensure that:

- making a complaint is as easy as possible;
- we treat a complaint as a clear expression of dissatisfaction or concern which calls for an immediate response, such as regarding the actions or behaviour of a member, visitor or employee of the synagogue;
- we deal with it promptly, politely and, when appropriate, confidentially;
- we respond in the right way - for example, with an explanation, or an apology where we have got things wrong, or information on any action taken;
- we learn from complaints, use them to improve what we do, and review annually our complaints policy and procedures.

This procedure does not cover complaints made that could relate to the Safeguarding of a child or vulnerable adult. Any such complaint should be made to the Liberal Jewish Synagogue safeguarding officer – Sue Head.

In the first instance, if you are unable to resolve the issue informally, you should contact the Executive Director (execdirector@ljs.org). You will receive an acknowledgement within two working days and a response and an explanation within 15 working days (subject to all parties being available should an investigation be required).

The Executive will either deal directly with the complaint or assign an investigating officer to deal with it.

In the event of a complaint involving a member of the senior management team or is a situation which poses significant risk to the organisation's reputation the Executive Director may choose to appoint a complaints panel. In the event of a complaint about the Executive Director or Rabbi, a complaints panel will also be appointed.

The complaints panel will include members of the synagogue Council, either the Executive Director or Rabbi and if required, an expert with the relevant experience in the area of complaint. A Chair of the panel will be appointed to lead the process.

The investigating officer, if this stage has been followed, will give all investigation materials, and reports and proposed resolutions to the panel. The panel should receive these at least five working days before meeting to enable them to formulate any questions that they would like the Chair of the panel to ask the complainant. The Chair of the panel will contact the complainant to clarify their understanding of the issues and why they cannot be resolved by any solutions that have been proposed; all communication with the complainant will be through the Chair.

The panel will consider all materials relating to the complaint.

The Chair will summarise the findings of the panel and proposed resolutions and present these to the complainant within 10 working days of convening the panel, unless further investigation is required. In this instance, a new deadline for response will be agreed and communicated to the complainant. The Chair of the panel will make it clear that the final stage of appeal is to the Chair of the Board of National Officers, and that this should be made within two weeks of the presentation of the panel's findings.

If you are not satisfied with the initial response to the complaint then you can write to the Chairman (care of the Synagogue office marked "Private and Confidential") and ask for your complaint and the response to be reviewed.

The Chair of Board of National Officers will request all relevant paperwork from the Chair of the complaints panel and will ask the complainant for any clarifying information that they require. The Chair of Board of National Officers may seek further advice on the resolution of this matter from any appropriate person, emphasising the need for confidentiality.

You can expect them to acknowledge your request within 5 working days of receipt and a response within a further 15 working days.

The Synagogue's aim is to resolve all matters as quickly as possible. However, inevitably some issues will be more complex and therefore may require longer to be fully investigated. If a matter requires more detailed investigation, you will receive an interim response describing what is being done to deal with the matter, and when a full reply can be expected and from whom.

January 2023

To be reviewed annually

Jonathan Bruck Executive Director