

# **SRFS\_Policy on Grievance Redressal**

## **1. Introduction**

At Sanghamithra Rural Financial Services (SRFS), we are committed to addressing and resolving customer grievances in a prompt, efficient, and customer-centric manner. To this end, a dedicated Grievance Redressal Officer (GRO) has been appointed at our Head Office, ensuring that all customer concerns are systematically monitored, tracked, and resolved. While every SRFS employee shares the responsibility of addressing customer queries and complaints, the GRO takes a lead role in overseeing grievance management.

## **2. Objectives**

The company's policy, on Grievances Redressal has been formulated considering the following objectives:

- Borrowers are always treated fairly
- Complaints raised are dealt with courtesy and responded on time.
- All complaints are dealt efficiently and fairly without bias towards sex, ethnicity, caste, creed or religion
- Borrowers are fully informed of the channels to escalate their complaints / grievances within and outside the organization (AKMI, Sa-Dhan and RBI)
- The company's employees will work in good faith and without prejudice to the interests of the borrowers
- To provide timely solution of the issue/complaints/grievances of the Borrowers to make them satisfied and ensure long term association with them.

## **3. Scope & Applicability**

The Grievance Redressal Mechanism put in place aims to provide a simple, speedy and cost-effective mechanism to the aggrieved parties.

The purpose of this escalation is to bring the grievance of the aggrieved party to the attention of the appropriate higher authorities in SRFS, enabling them to take a considered view on the matter. However, this process does not replace or serve as an alternative to the judicial or quasi-judicial forums available to the aggrieved party for adjudication or redressal of their grievance.

#### 4. Definitions

Common definitions used in the policy are:

- **Grievance:** expression of problems, dissatisfaction or concern about the company product terms, or services or staff. Examples include: complaints about delay in loan processing, rejection of loan application, delay in insurance claim, non-payment by group members and group issues; staff misbehavior, mis-appropriation of funds, unauthorized activities or any serious issue to be classified as grievances
- **Query:** when the clients call or inquire about loan, interest amount, EMI, KYC details, insurance claim, disbursement, credit into the bank account and other products
- **Information:** when clients call to give information. For instance, that they are ready with the KYC documents, death of a client/spouse etc.
- **Grievance Redressal Officer:** SRFS's appointed staff who is designated Grievance Redressal Officer (GRO) as per the RBI Fair Practice Code for NBFC-MFIs
- **Resolution:** formal process of resolving a complaint raised by client.

#### 5. Coverage of the Policy

The Policy covers the grievance of the customer of SRFS who may approach the offices of the company for the resolution of their complaints.

## 6. Procedure

Channels available for customers to contact SRFS for complaints/requests/queries

- Contact Credit Officer directly for resolution
- Drop complaint in suggestion/complaint box placed in branches
- Call Toll free number - 1800 425 0508 -Landline-080-25350301, 25354708
- Send an Email to – [info@sanghamithra.org](mailto:info@sanghamithra.org)
- Write a letter to head office address mentioned in loan pass books

Any of our customers or any other person having any grievance against our staff or our services can take up the same with Center and/or Credit Officer by raising the grievance during sangha/group meetings, meeting Credit Officer at the branch or writing a complaint and dropping the same in the complaint/suggestion box kept in each branch. Any Grievance Received from the complainant shall be addressed by the branch within 5 working days.

If the aggrieved person is not satisfied with Center/Credit Officer's response or if the matter is of sensitive nature, she/he can call our Toll-free Number 1800 425 0508 or write an email to [info@sanghamithra.org](mailto:info@sanghamithra.org) or address a letter to:

Grievances Redressal Officer  
Sanghamithra Rural Financial Services  
#612, 1<sup>st</sup> Main Road, Domlur Layout  
Bangalore 560071

Grievances that are escalated to or directly reported to Grievance Redressal team at Head Office shall be resolved within a TAT of 30 working days (which includes 5 working days allowed for the branch).

The toll-free number along with the communication address has been printed in the loan pass book issued to customers. Details of grievance

redressal channels are also published on the company's website as well as displayed on the notice boards at branches and Head Office. It is also printed in the SHG meeting minutes book which is used to document the minutes of the SHG meeting. Also, information regarding the channels available for reporting grievances is communicated to all customers through SHG meetings.

## **7. Grievance Redressal Process @ Branch**

All field staff including the Credit Officers should adhere to the following process:

- When any of our customer contacts the branch directly with any “case”, the Credit Officer should make a note of the issue in a register maintained for this purpose. Simultaneously, the Credit Officer updates the details of the case to GRO which will generate a complaint number.
- The issue can be addressed at branch level directly or raised to the concerned department for resolution. Complaints registered will be followed up by the central team for resolution and necessary support will be provided.
- In case any issue cannot be resolved at branch level for whatsoever reason within the stipulated time, it can be escalated to grievance redressal officer with all the details and Credit Officer's comments regarding the member's issue.

All issues (queries, requests and complaints) raised by customers are to be shared by the to the respective Area Manager & Zonal Manager on a weekly basis on every Monday.

## **8. Process @GRO**

- The toll-free number are accessible during the working hours for grievance redressal and any queries, requests or complaints raised by customers will be documented to provide appropriate resolution.

- When a customer calls the toll-free number, GRO shall collect the caller's details and the concerned member details when the caller is not our member. A complaint is registered to capture the grievance on immediate basis.
- Post the registration of complaint, additional information about the member/s are obtained by the GRO from the system, branch as well as the concerned department. The case is then diagnosed to determine the root cause of the grievance and further classification/determination of TAT. The turnaround time (TAT) for resolution of customer issues shall depend on the nature of the issue raised.
- When an issue is received by concerned department from GRO, they need to respond within 3 working days with the resolution TAT based on the nature of the grievance. If there is no response within 3 working days, GRO will follow the response TAT escalation matrix to escalate the matter to the next levels.
- The TAT provided by the concerned department will be reviewed by the GRO and then communicated to the customer/complainant.

*Note: In case of insurance claim related issues where documents are pending from the claimant/Nominee, the TAT will be considered from the date of receipt of all the relevant documents from the Nominee.*

- GRO will follow up with the concerned departments for resolution of the grievance within the committed TAT. If any case is not resolved within the above specified TAT, GRO will follow the response TAT escalation matrix to escalate the matter to the next levels.
- Once the case is resolved, the concerned department will interact with the complainant and confirm the resolution based on the consent of the customer. Further, they communicate regarding the closure to the GRO. GRO will update the closure status.

## **Escalation Channel**

If the resolution is not provided within 30 days from raising the grievance or if the complainant is not satisfied with the resolution provided to him/her, then he/she can escalate the same to:

The Ombudsman, Association of Karnataka Micro finance Institutions,

# 3, 1st Floor, 1st Main, 1st Cross,  
Kodehalli Main Road Bhadrappa Layout Nagashettihalli  
Bangalore – 560094.

Email: [info@akmi.in](mailto:info@akmi.in)

Toll Free: 1800-425-5654

Or

Sa-Dhan

Head Office: A1 - 226, 1st Floor  
Safdarjung Enclave, New Delhi - 110029  
[nandi@sa-dhan.org](mailto:nandi@sa-dhan.org),

+91 11 47174400

If the resolution is not provided within 60 days from raising the grievance or if the complainant is not satisfied with the resolution provided to him/her, then he/she can escalate the same to:

General Manager Consumer Education and Protection Cell,  
Reserve Bank of India,  
10/3/8, Nrupathunga Road, Bengaluru – 560001 and call at  
080 22211437

## **Anonymous Calls**

For anonymous calls received at the toll-free number, the nature of the call is to be determined first. In case the call was wrongly addressed to SRFS, the case shall get noted as a query received incorrectly and closed upfront. In case the call is of a serious nature where the complainant wishes to remain anonymous and raises a serious complaint either regarding a SRFS employee or regarding a service provided by SRFS, the nature of the case is recorded in the Grievance Redressal System along with the location of caller, branch (if available) and employee name/nature of service keeping the caller's name anonymous.

An investigation needs to be carried out regarding the call by the grievance cell. If the matter is extremely sensitive & personal in nature, then a field visit by the grievance redressal officer or a senior officer from head office or Zonal office needs to be arranged to determine the facts of the case first hand. The concerned branch must not be involved in the investigation process.

On completion of the field visit, a report is submitted to the grievance redressal officer as well as CEO regarding the facts of the case and recommended steps to resolve the issue. The grievance redressal officer with the approval of CEO shall take action based on the report.

## **9. Reporting**

Grievance Redressal Committee (GRC)”

### **Board of Directors**

- 1. Quarterly reports to Board with a detailed analysis of grievances received, resolved and pending with the GRO.**

## ANNEXURES

### Annexure I- Case Type & Category

Case Type to be recorded for tracking purposes can be one of the following three:

1. **Grievance/Complaint:** A "Grievance/Complaint" is defined as any communication from our customer to SRFS that expresses dissatisfaction about an action or lack of action, about the standard of service/deficiency of service of SRFS and/or any intermediary or asks for remedial action.

Examples:

- Customer raising an issue regarding a request not addressed on time.
- Inappropriate behavior by any SRFS staff
- Harassment of customer regarding repayment
- Non-disbursal of a loan on time, etc.

2. **Query** – is defined as any communication from the customers for the primary purpose of requesting information about SRFS and/or its services.

Examples: Clarification on

- Interest rate offered
- Repayment amount
- Eligibility for loan etc.

3. **Request** – A "Request" is defined as any communication from a customer to SRFS soliciting a service such as a change or modification in the policy.

Examples:

- Request for moratorium on her existing loan
- Fresh emergency loan,
- Higher loan amount,
- Personal Loan,
- Insurance claim request, etc.

## Annexure II- Escalation Process

**Table A: Escalation process** (in case of no response from concerned department/staff)

Responsible	Timeline (Working Days)
Customer contacts branch with Grievance	Day 0
Credit Officer	Day 0
Area Manager or equivalent	Day 0 to Day 3
Zonal Manager / State Head / Head of the department	Day 5
CEO	Day 7

**Table B: Escalation process** (in case the case is not resolved within TAT)

Responsible	Timeline (Working Days)
Customer contacts branch with Grievance	Day 0
Credit Officer	Day 0
Area Manager or equivalent	Day beyond Specified TAT* for the case
Zonal Manager / State Head / Head of the department	7 days beyond TAT
CEO	10 days beyond TAT

\* TAT is the turnaround time for any case, which needs to be provided by the concerned department or team member on receiving the case. In case the department does not respond, default TAT will be assigned by the GRO which is less than or equal to 7 days.

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