



Feedback, Compliments, and Complaints Policy

November 2025

Version 3.0

Revision History

Revision	Date of Release	Purpose
Initial Draft	January 2013	Initial Release
Version 2.0	April 2023	Updated for GDPR and <u>Complaints Management</u> <u>Procedure for Voluntary Orgs</u> issued by the HSE, Jan 2021, v9
Version 3.0	November 2025	Policy rewritten to improve clarity, introduce a patron-centred plain-English public guide, and separate detailed legal and compliance material into internal appendices.

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Our Commitment

You have the right to be treated with dignity, respect, and fairness when you use Outhouse LGBTQ+ Centre.

This guide explains:

- What a complaint is
- How you can raise an issue
- What will happen when you do
- Your rights throughout the process
- Where you can go if you are not satisfied with the outcome

Most concerns are sorted quickly and informally. When something needs a more formal process, we follow clear steps so everything is handled fairly and within set timeframes.

We welcome all feedback. It helps us improve and strengthen our work for the community.

What Counts as a Complaint?

A complaint is when you tell us that:

- Something went wrong
- You were treated unfairly
- A service or interaction did not meet a reasonable standard

You do *not* need to label something as a “complaint” for us to treat it as one.

You can complain if you:

- Use or have used our services
- Tried to access a service
- Took part in an activity organised by Outhouse
- Are a donor, volunteer, or community member

How You Can Make a Complaint

You can contact us in any of these ways:

- Speak to a staff member or volunteer
- Phone us
- Email us
- Ask for the complaints procedure and form

We encourage you to put your complaint in writing.

If you cannot do that, we will take your complaint verbally and record it for you.

You can have an advocate help you.

If you want us to speak directly with your advocate, you will need to give written consent so we can protect your privacy.

How We Handle Complaints

Step 1: Sorting things out quickly

Most issues can be and are resolved at the first point of contact. A staff member or volunteer will work with you to fix the problem where possible.

If you are unhappy with the outcome or if the issue is more serious, you can move to a formal process.

Step 2: Formal complaint

A Complaints Officer (a trained member of our team) reviews your complaint.

They will:

- Acknowledge your complaint within five working days
- Explain the steps they will take
- Keep you informed of progress
- Carry out an investigation
- Write a report explaining the outcome and any recommendations

We aim to complete this within **30 working days**. If we need more time (for example, if your complaint is complex), we will let you know and keep you updated every 20 working days.

Step 3: Review

If you are not satisfied with the outcome, you can request a review within **20 working days**. Someone who was not involved in the investigation will look at your complaint again.

Step 4: Independent review

Because the Health Service Executive (HSE) funds Outhouse, you also have the right to use the HSE's complaints system: [**Your Service, Your Say**](#).

At any time, you can contact:

- [The Ombudsman](#)
- [The Ombudsman for Children](#)
- [Charities Regulator](#)

Timeframes You Can Expect

- Acknowledgement of your complaint: **within five working days**
- Formal investigation: **within 30 working days**
- Updates if it takes longer: **every 20 working days**
- Requesting a review: **within 20 working days**

You usually need to make a complaint within **12 months** of the issue, though we may extend this in special circumstances.

How We Support You

You can:

- Ask questions at any stage
- Request information about the process
- Use an advocate
- Withdraw your complaint at any time

We treat all complaints with confidentiality and respect.
We will explain every step and give reasons for final decisions.

What We Ask of You

To help us respond quickly, you can:

- Tell us what happened in your own words
- Share any information that may help us understand the issue
- Let us know how you would like us to contact you
- Let us know what your desired outcome is

We ask everyone to treat staff, volunteers, and other patrons with respect throughout the process.

Outcomes

If your complaint is upheld, you may receive:

- An apology
- An explanation
- A correction or change
- A refund, replacement, or repair (where relevant)
- A change in process or practice

Feedback helps us learn and improve.

Contact Us

You can raise any issue through:

Email: hello@outhouse.ie

Phone: 01 873 4999

In person: Speak to any team member