



LIABILITY MANAGEMENT & OPERATION DEPARTMENT.

CUSTOMER GRIEVANCE REDRESSAL POLICY: FY 2023-24.

01. PREAMBLE.

- 01.01. In the present competitive scenario, it is most important for the bank to render prompt, delighted and efficient customer service to maintain sustained business growth.
- 01.02. Today's customers are very knowledgeable about banking facilities as well as aware of their rights.
- 01.03. Customer's communications, if not attended promptly, may escalate into complaints to higher levels, such as the ombudsman/consumer court, thereby affecting the image of the Bank.
- 01.04. An unattended suggestion, query, enquiry, grievance, complaint and unsatisfactory service results in customer dissatisfaction leading to customer grievance. For brevity purpose, all these "suggestion, query, enquiry, grievance, complaint and unsatisfactory service" will be mentioned as "complaint" hereafter.
- 01.05. Complaints should be looked into properly and positively because the complaint reveals the shortcomings in the bank's working.

02. INTRODUCTION.

- 02.01. As directed by RBI, this "CUSTOMER GRIEVANCE REDRESSAL POLICY" has been prepared duly incorporating the procedures to handle customer complaints at the branch level as well as at Head Office levels to redress the same quickly.

03. PURPOSE.

- 03.01. The Bank realizes that quick and effective handling of suggestions / complaints as well as prompt corrective & preventive actions to improve processes are essential to providing excellent customer service to all segments of customers. To achieve this, the Bank has a documented Policy for Redressal of Customer Grievances.
- 03.02. Through this Policy, the Bank will ensure that a suitable mechanism exists for receiving and addressing complaints from its customers/constituents with specific emphasis on resolving such complaints fairly and expeditiously regardless of the sources of the complaints.

04. OBJECTIVES OF THE POLICY.

The objectives of this policy are as under:--

- 04.01. To minimize customer complaints by providing proper service, reviewing the system and prompt redressal of customer complaints.
- 04.02. To ensure that the customers are treated transparent and fairly at all times.
- 04.03. To ensure that complaints raised by customers are dealt with courteously & respectfully and on time.
- 04.04. To ensure that customers are fully informed of the avenues available to them to escalate their complaints/ grievances if they are not fully satisfied with the response of the Bank to their complaints.
- 04.05. To ensure that, all complaints are dealt with efficiently to resolve in a reasonable period.
- 04.06. To ensure that the Bank employees work in good faith and without prejudice to the interests of the customer.
- 04.07. To ensure that the Bank treats all complaints efficiently and fairly, as inefficient handling can damage the Bank's reputation and business.

05. BROAD PRINCIPLES.

The entire grievance redressal mechanism is based on the following principles:

- 05.01. **Transparency:** The customer will be provided with information regarding the channels they can access to service their requirements and resolve their issues. In addition, the turn-around time for issues to be redressed including investigation and resolution will be communicated transparently.
- 05.02. **Escalation:** Information on the process of escalation of complaints to the next level in case the customer is not satisfied with the resolution provided by the branch level in the Bank will be made available in the branches.



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05.03. **Customer Education:** The Bank shall endeavour to make continuous efforts to educate its customers to enable them to make informed choices regarding banking products and reduce errors in banking transactions by arranging customer meets.

06. COVERAGE OF POLICY.

06.01. Registration of complaints.

06.02. Internal machinery to handle customer complaints/grievances by the Branch Manager at the Branch Level.

06.03. Internal machinery to handle customer complaints/grievances by Nodal Officer at HO Level.

06.04. Time frame.

06.05. Interactions with customers.

06.06. Training to operate staff on handling complaints.

06.07. Dealing with complaints and improving customer relations.

06.08. Implementation and MIS.

07. REGISTRATION OF COMPLAINTS.

07.01. The bank will entertain all the suggestions/complaints received through any type of channels, such as personal meetings, phone calls, by post, email, registering in the complaint book, putting in the complaint box or any other channel.

07.02. Appropriate arrangements for receiving complaints and suggestions using the Complaint & Suggestion Book, Complaint & Suggestion Box are provided at branches and by guiding displays on notice boards.

07.03. The receiving authority i.e. Branch Manager at the Branch or the Nodal Officer at HO will decide whether the nature of communication is a complaint or a suggestion.

07.04. Every communication will be acknowledged by giving a "Suggestion / Complaint Number" for further communication.

07.05. Every communication which is not a complaint will be treated as a suggestion.

07.05.01. Upon receipt of the suggestion, the Branch Manager will answer stating that due thought will be given to the suggestion.

07.05.02. Then Branch Manager will forward it, to the DGM, Liability Management and Operations Department with his / her opinion, who will further submit it to the CEO with his / her opinion.

07.05.03. If a suggestion is received by the Nodal Officer, HO he/she will send it to the CEO with his / her opinion.

07.06. The features of the complaint are-

07.06.01. The complaint means any allegation in writing made by a complainant that an unfair trade practice or a restrictive trade practice has been adopted by the Branch / Bank.

07.06.02. A written or spoken statement in which someone says that somebody has done something wrong or that something is not satisfactory with the expression of grief, pain, or dissatisfaction.

07.06.03. The complaint is a grievance, problem, difficulty, or concern the act of complaining about the services hired or availed of or agreed to be hired or availed of by him suffer from deficiency in any respect.

07.06.04. "Complaint" will include any allegation in writing made by a complainant that "the services mentioned in the complaint suffer from deficiency in any respect",

07.06.05. It means a written expression alleging contravention of any provision of the code of conduct including way of behaviour or rules, regulations, or guidelines or circulars or directions issued by the Bank or any of its associated persons.

07.06.06. An allegation made orally or in writing to a Bank Authority with a view to his taking action, under the Code, that some person, whether known or unknown, has committed an offence, but it does not include the report of a police officer.

07.06.07. The word "complaint" has a wide meaning since it includes even an oral allegation. It may, therefore, be assumed that no form is prescribed which the complaint must take. It may only be said that there must be an allegation that prima facie discloses the commission of an offence with the necessary facts.



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08. THE INTERNAL MACHINERY TO HANDLE CUSTOMER COMPLAINTS / GRIEVANCES AT BRANCH LEVEL.

- 08.01. Redressal of customer service complaints in the branch will be primarily the responsibility of the Branch Manager.
- 08.02. The Branch Manager has to settle all complaints in the branch.
- 08.03. As such, the Branch Manager will give complete satisfaction to the customer and if the customer is not satisfied it will be his job to suggest a suitable alternative.
- 08.04. It is the responsibility of the Branch Manager to maintain the "Suggestion Cum Complaint Register". He / She will record all the complaints invariably.
- 08.05. The Branch Manager will thus be responsible for attending to complaints/grievances.
- 08.06. The Branch Manager will be responsible for ensuring the satisfactory closure of all complaints received at the branches.
- 08.07. In case the Branch Manager is not in a position to resolve the complaint completely or the customer is not satisfied with the resolution provided by the Branch Manager, then the customer will be provided the name, address and contact number of the Nodal Officer at Head Office.
- 08.08. If the complaint is not fully resolved within a stipulated period or it requires some time for examination of the complaint, under the circumstances the branch should communicate to the customer assuring to resolve the same in a short period invariably.
- 08.09. If the Branch Manager feels that it is not possible to solve the complaint at the branch level, then the matter should be referred to the Nodal Officer at the Head office for guidance and the necessary message be conveyed to the customer.
- 08.10. Thus the Branch Manager will make provisions for:-
- 08.10.01. The Suggestion cum Complaint Register.
- 08.10.02. The Suggestion cum Complaint box.
- 08.10.03. Making available the name, address and contact number of the Nodal Officer. Therefore, the name, address and contact number of the Nodal Officer are displayed at all the branches.
- 08.10.04. Making available the contact details of the Banking Ombudsman of the area. Therefore, contact details of the Banking Ombudsman of the area are displayed at the branch.

09. THE INTERNAL MACHINERY TO HANDLE CUSTOMER COMPLAINTS / GRIEVANCES AT NODAL OFFICER, HO LEVEL.

- 09.01. The Deputy General Manager, Operations will be the Nodal Officer.
- 09.02. The Nodal Officer will evaluate the implementation of commitments to Customers and feedback on quality of customer service received from various fields and implementation of commitments to Customers.
- 09.03. The Nodal Officer will be responsible to ensure that all regulatory instructions regarding customer service are followed by the Bank. Towards this, the Nodal Officer will obtain necessary feedback from Branch Managers/ Zonal Managers /Functional Heads.
- 09.04. The Nodal Officer will resolve complaints/grievances received from the customers directly and or referred by the Branch Managers.
- 09.05. The Nodal Officer, after discussing the issue with the Branch Manager / Zonal Manager, will try to resolve the complaint to the satisfaction of the customer. At times the Nodal Officer may interact with the customer and try to resolve the issue.
- 09.06. If the Nodal Officer is unable to satisfy the customer, such complaints will be referred to the CEO.

10. TIME LIMIT.

- 10.01. As per the Banking Ombudsman Scheme, if the customer's complaint is not attended to properly by any Bank/branch or the complaint is not accepted by the Bank/branch or the complaint is not resolved within 30 days the customer can approach the Banking Ombudsman with his complaint or explore other legal avenues available for grievance redressal.
- 10.02. Given this, this time limit is determined as below:-
- 10.02.01. At Branch Level by the Branch Manager: - Within 7 working days.



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- 10.03. At Head office by the Nodal Officer:-Within 14 working days from the receipt of the unresolved complaint from the Branch Manager or within 21 days, if received directly.
- 10.04. At the Head office by the CEO: – Within 07 working days from the receipt of the unresolved complaint from the Nodal Officer or within 30 days, if received directly.
- 10.05. Each level will scrupulously adhere to the time frame specified for complaint resolution.
- 10.06. If not adhered to, the complaint should be redressed within the outer time limit of 30 days.
- 10.07. If it is not possible to adhere to the time limit, the complaint will be immediately escalated to the next level.
- 10.08. In case, the customer is still not satisfied, then the CEO will place the issue before the Board for their decision.
- 10.09. All complaints remaining unresolved for more than 30 days from the date of receipt of the complaint from the customer will be reported to BOARD by the CEO.
- 10.09.01. BoD will review the quality of Customer Service rendered and the nature of complaints, every six months.

11. INTERACTIONS WITH CUSTOMERS.

- 11.01. The Bank recognizes that customers' expectations/requirements/grievances can be better appreciated through personal interaction with customers by the Bank's staff.
- 11.02. Many of the complaints arise on account of lack of awareness among customers about the Bank's services and such interactions will help the customers appreciate banking services better.
- 11.03. The feedback from customers will be valuable inputs for the Bank for revising its products and services to meet customer requirements.
- 11.04. Hence, Branch Manager will arrange atleast one meeting with customers in a month.
- 11.05. At the time of branch visits, the higher authority shall take review of the complaints/grievances of the customers.
- 11.06. The higher authorities shall take care of the bank by guiding and giving suggestions for improvement in customer service and maintain rapport with the customers through branch visits and meeting the customers at branches.

12. TRAINING TO OPERATING STAFF ON HANDLING COMPLAINTS.

- 12.01. Prompt and efficient customer service has become the key to the success of any organisation. This applies specifically to banks, since banks are service organizations.
- 12.02. It is thus of vital importance that the employees of the Bank keep themselves updated about the new initiatives taken within the Bank as well as in the banking industry and extend all the services in a prompt, courteous and helpful manner.
- 12.03. A well-attended query or enquiry results in satisfaction of the customer.
- 12.04. An unattended query or enquiry results in customer dissatisfaction leading to customer grievance.
- 12.05. Customer grievances, if not attended promptly, can be escalated in the form of complaints to higher levels like the consumer court / the Ombudsman, thereby affecting the reputation of the Bank.
- 12.06. It is therefore, very important that the employees of the Bank must have complete knowledge as to procedure and system of the bank. They should be upgraded with latest changes in the systems and procedure for extending all the services in a prompt and courteous manner.
- 12.07. Every employee is expected to understand the importance of attending to customer grievance as a part of customer service, look at every query or enquiry as a business opportunity and try to convert it into business.
- 12.08. The Bank will provide comprehensive training to its employees, specifically meant for handling customer complaints and grievances.
- 12.09. The amendments and circular instructions will be issued which will help the staff to attend to customer queries promptly.



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13. DEALING WITH COMPLAINTS.

- 13.01. Complaints/suggestions box will be provided at each branch / office of the bank.
- 13.02. At every branch of the bank a notice informing the customers to meet the Branch Manager will be displayed regarding grievances.
- 13.03. Complaint book with three perforated copies in each set will be introduced in due course of time so that Bank will instantly provide an acknowledgement to the customer under copy to the Head Office along with the remark of the Branch Manager on next day of complaint.
- 13.04. The complaint box will be opened daily. On the complaint box itself, there should be mention that, "Complaint box shall be open daily".
- 13.05. Bank will ensure that the complaint registers / book will be kept at prominent place in branches.
- 13.06. All the branches will maintain a complaint register duly entering all the complaints/grievances received through any type of channel by them directly or through the Head Office.
- 13.07. Bank will acknowledge all the complaints, by giving "Complaint No."
- 13.08. The complaint register will contain date of receipt, complain No., name of the complainer, type of complaint etc. which should be signed by two independent officers.
- 13.09. The complaint registers maintained by branches will be scrutinised by the concerned Zonal Manager during his periodical visit to the branches and his observations/comments recorded in the relative visit reports.
- 13.10. The complaint form, along with the name of the Nodal Officer for complaint redressal, will be provided in the homepage itself to facilitate complaint submission by customers.
- 13.10.01. The complaint form will also indicate that the first point for redressal of complaints is the bank itself and that complainants will approach the Banking Ombudsman only, if the complaint is not resolved at the bank level within a month.
- 13.10.02. In addition, the name, address and telephone numbers of the Controlling Authority of the bank to whom complaints can be addressed will also be given in the notice board prominently.
- 13.11. Similar information will be displayed in the Notice Board, in all the branches to indicate the name and address of the Banking Ombudsman.
- 13.12. Bank will prominently display at the branches and on web-site the names of the officials who can be contacted for redressal of complaints, together with their direct telephone number, complete address (not Post Box No.) and e-mail address, etc.,
- 13.13. Where the complaints are not redressed within one month, the concerned branch / Head Office will forward a copy of the same to the concerned Nodal Officer under the Banking Ombudsman Scheme and keep him updated regarding the status of the complaint.
- 13.14. Banks will give wide publicity to the grievance redressal machinery through advertisements and also by placing them on their web sites.

14. IMPLEMENTATION AND MIS.

- 14.01. **Branch Level Customer Service Committees.** Bank will establish Customer Service Committees at branch level to encourage communication between the customers and the bank at the branch level, having all type of customers; senior citizen may preferably be included therein.
- 14.01.01. Branch Manager will conduct a meeting at least once a month to study complaints/ suggestions, cases of delay; difficulties faced / reported by customers / members of the Committee and evolve ways and means of improving customer service.
- 14.01.02. The branch level committees will submit its reports giving inputs / suggestions to the Nodal Officer at HO who will further put it Standing Committee on Customer Service through the CEO.
- 14.01.03. Every Branch will submit "Weekly statement" to the Nodal Officer at HO. Format/columns of statement :- Date of receipt of Complaint, complain No., name of the complainer, Details of complaint / type of complaint, whether resolved?, if resolved, date of complaint resolved.
- 14.02. Nodal Officer will submit "Fortnightly Statement" to the CEO in the same format.
- 14.03. The CEO will submit detailed report to "Customer Service Committee at HO" once every six months and initiate prompt corrective action wherever service quality / skill gaps have been noticed.



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14.04. **Analysis and Disclosure of complaints - Disclosure of complaints / unimplemented awards of Banking Ombudsmen along with Financial Results.** Bank will place a statement before the Board / Customer Service Committees analysing the complaints received. Statement of complaints with its analysis and unimplemented awards of the Banking will also be disclosed along with their financial results. The complaints will be analysed:-

14.04.01. To identify customer service areas in which the complaints are frequently received;

14.04.02. To identify frequent sources of complaint;

14.04.03. To identify systemic deficiencies; and

14.04.04. For initiating appropriate action to make the grievance redressal mechanism more effective.

14.05. **Standing Committee on Customer Service.** Bank will also form a Standing Committee on Customer Service. Standing Committee will act as the bridge between the various departments of the bank and the Board / Customer Service Committees of the Board.

The Standing Committee will assess the level of customer service and implementation process in all branches & departments and will provide relevant feedback while the Customer Service Committee of the Board would oversee and review / modify the initiatives. Thus the two Committees would be mutually reinforcing with one feeding into the other. The constitution and functions of the Standing Committee are indicated below:-

14.05.01. Will be chaired by the Chairman and include non-officials as its members to enable an independent feedback on the quality of customer service rendered by the bank.

14.05.02. Carry the task of ensuring timely and effective compliance of customer service, receiving the necessary feedback to determine that the action taken by various departments of the bank is in tune with the spirit and intent of such instructions.

14.05.03. Take review of the practice and procedures prevalent in the bank and take necessary corrective action, on an ongoing basis as the intent is translated into action only through procedures and practices.

14.05.04. A report on the performance of the Standing Committee indicating, inter alia, the areas reviewed, procedures / practices identified and simplified / introduced will be submitted periodically to the Customer Service Committee of the Board.

15. VALIDITY & REVIEW OF THE POLICY.

15.01. The policy shall be reviewed annually in tune with the regulatory guidelines issued from time to time or internal requirements or as and when considered necessary.

15.02. This Policy shall be valid up to 31st March, 2024.

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