

POLICY ON GRIEVANCE REDRESSAL
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POLICY ON GRIEVANCE REDRESSAL

1. Introduction

In the present scenario of competitive banking, excellence in customer service is the most important and effective 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 oriented organizations with huge customer base. 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. Customer dissatisfaction would spoil bank's name and image. 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.

In order to make bank's redressal mechanism more meaningful and effective, a structured system needs to be built up towards such end. Such system would ensure that the redressal sought is just and fair and is permissible within the given frame-work of rules and regulations. The policy document would be made available at all branches. The concerned employees should be made aware about the complaint handling process.

1.1 The customer complaint arises due to:

- a) The attitudinal aspects in dealing with customers
- b) Inadequacy of the functions/arrangements made available to the customers or gaps in standards of services expected (including Digital channels) 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, by mail, orally or over telephone. 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.

1.2 Applicability:

This policy is applicable to all the Branches/Offices dealing with the customers and staff members involved in rendering customer service.

1.3 Coverage:

The policy covers the aspects of customer grievances received through various sources such as branch, call centre, email, letter, web site etc., and the various guidelines issued by RBI & other regulators on the grievance redressal process.

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 triennial 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. The committee shall review the grievances received during the review period and may suggest measures to reduce the number of grievances received and to effectively redress the grievances.

2.2 Standing Committee on Customer Service

The Standing Committee on Customer Service will be chaired by the Managing Director / President & COO of the Bank, besides two to three senior executives of the bank. The committee would also have 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 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 Divisional Manager / 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 branch level committees may also submit quarterly reports giving inputs / suggestions to the Standing Committee on Customer Service thus enabling the Standing Committee to examine them and provide relevant feedback to the Customer Service Committee of the Board for necessary policy / procedural action
- The Standing Committee may review the practice and procedures prevalent in the bank and take necessary corrective action, on an on-going basis as the intent is translated into action only through procedures and practices.
- The Standing Committee on Customer Service in each bank shall periodically review the unauthorised electronic banking transactions reported by customers or otherwise, as also the action taken thereon, the functioning of the grievance redress mechanism and take appropriate measures to improve the systems and procedures.
- The standing committee on customer Service should review the credit card operations including reports of defaulters to a Credit Information Company which has obtained Certificate of Registration from RBI and of which the bank is a member and credit card related complaints on a monthly basis and take measures to improve the services and ensure the orderly growth in the credit card operations.

2.3 Branch Level Customer Service Committee

Branches shall form Branch Level Customer Service committees at the branch level and conduct meetings on a monthly basis as per RBI guidelines. The suggestions received from the customers on the products & services shall be implemented wherever feasible as per Internal Policy guidelines of the Bank.

The branch level committees may also submit quarterly reports giving inputs / suggestions to the Standing Committee on Customer Service

2.4 Nodal Officer and other designated officials to handle complaints and grievances

Bank would appoint a Nodal Officer who will be responsible for the implementation of customer service and complaint handling for the entire bank. The Bank may also appoint other designated Officers at specified centres to handle complaint grievances in respect of branches falling under their control. The name and contact details of Nodal Officer(s) will be displayed on branch notice board and web sites.

3. Mandatory display requirements

It is mandatory for the bank to provide:

- 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
- Code of bank's commitments to customers/Fair Practice code

- Prominently display at the branches, the names of the officials who can be contacted for redressal of complaints, together with their direct telephone number, fax number, complete address (not Post Box No.) and e-mail address, etc., for proper and timely contact by the customers and for enhancing the effectiveness of the redressal machinery.

- The names of the officials displayed at the branches who can be contacted for redressal of complaints should also include the name and other details of the concerned Nodal Officer appointed under the Integrated Ombudsman Scheme, 2021.

- Banks shall display on their web-sites, the names and other details of the officials at their Head Office / Regional Offices / Zonal Offices who can be contacted for redressal of complaints including the names of the Nodal Officers / Principal Nodal Officers.

- Contact details including name, complete address, telephone / fax number, email address, etc., of the Principal Nodal Officer needs to be prominently displayed in the portal of the bank preferably on the first page of the web-site so that the aggrieved customer can approach the bank with a sense of satisfaction that she / he has been attended at a senior level.

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 Divisional Office for guidance. Similarly, if Divisional office finds that they are not able to solve the problem such cases may be referred to the Principal Nodal Officer at Central Office.

Bank shall ensure that redressal of complaints emanating from rural areas and those relating to financial assistance to Priority Sector and Government's Poverty Alleviation Programmes also form part of the above process. Where the complaints are redressed within the next working day, banks need not include the same in the statement of complaints. This is expected to serve as an incentive to the banks and their branches to redress the complaints within the next working day.

Bank has provided facility to customers to lodge the complaint through website, call centre, email and at Branches. Customers can lodge the complaints service wise inclusive of Digital channels through our Bank's corporate website which is also known as online dispute resolution. Customers are provided with tracking reference number as soon as lodging of complaint through website, call centre, email and they shall make use of the tracking reference number to know the status of the Claims/Complaints.

Dealing with Complaints and Improving Customer Relations

Complaints/suggestions box should be provided at each office of the bank. Further, at every office of the bank a notice requesting the customers to meet the branch manager may be displayed regarding grievances, if the grievances remain unredressed.

Complaint Book /Register:

Complaint Book /Register Complaint book with perforated copies in each set is made available at the branches to instantly provide an acknowledgement to the customers and an intimation to the Controlling Office.

The branches should maintain a separate complaints register in the prescribed format given for entering all the complaints/grievances received by them directly or through their Head Office/Govt. These registers should be maintained irrespective of the fact whether a complaint is received or not in the past.

The complaints registers maintained by branches should be scrutinised by the concerned Regional Manager during his periodical visit to the branches and his observations/comments recorded in the relative visit reports.

Banks having computerized operations may adopt the afore-said format and generate copies electronically.

Complaint Form

Further, a complaint form, along with the name of the Nodal Officer for complaint redressal, may be provided in the homepage itself to facilitate complaint submission by customers.

The complaint form should also indicate that the first point for redressal of complaints is the bank itself and that complainants may approach the Banking Ombudsman only if the complaint is not resolved at the bank level within a month. Similar information may be displayed in the boards put up in all the bank branches to indicate the name and address of the Banking Ombudsman. In addition, the name, address and telephone numbers of the Controlling Authority of the bank to whom complaints can be addressed may also be given prominently.

4.1 Time frame

Complaint has to be seen in the right perspective because they indirectly reveal a weak spot in the working of the bank. Complaint received should be analyzed from all possible angles. Specific time schedule may be set up for handling complaints and disposing them at all levels including branches, Divisional and Head Office. Branch manager should try to solve the complaint within specified time frames, decided by the bank in line with RBI directives and internal Board approved policies

Step: 1

If the customer is not satisfied with our services and products, he can contact the concerned branch manager where he is having his account through branch e-mail or registering the complaint in the complaint register available with the branch manager.

Step: 2

If the resolution given by the branch manager does not meet the customer's requirement or no reply is received within 5 working days from the branch then the customer can approach the concerned Divisional Manager for redressal of his complaint/grievance.

Step: 3

If the resolution given by the Divisional Manager does not meet the customer's requirement or no reply is received within 10 working days from the Divisional Manager then the customer can approach Central Office – Customer Care Cell by lodging his complaint through our website or the customer can send letter to The Nodal officer, Operations Department, Central Office, Karur or the customer can send e-mail directly to customerservice@kvbmail.com

Step: 4

If the customer still not satisfied with the resolution of his complaint or did not receive any reply within 30 days from the date of initial complaint at Central Office, then he can approach the concerned Banking Ombudsman for his grievance redressal.

The TAT mentioned above are from the date of receipt of customer complaint and a complaint received shall be resolved/ replied within time frame of 30 days from the date of complaint.

Sl. No.	Lodging / Escalation /Auto Escalation of complaints	Day of lodging / Escalation	Days available for redressal
1	Branch	1 st Day	5 days
2	Divisional Office	6 th Day	10 days
3	Central office	16 th Day	15 days

If the customer issue remains unresolved after approaching Branch /Divisional Office / Central Office or if the bank has not provided a resolution within 30 days customer may choose to refer the matter to the Banking Ombudsman's office.

Communication of bank's stand on any issue to the customer is a vital requirement. Complaints received which would require some time for examination of issues involved should invariably be acknowledged

promptly and final decision to be informed to complainant after getting required inputs. Branch and Divisional Office must send action taken report on complaints received by them to the Central Office at the end of every month.

4.2 Internal Ombudsman Scheme:

RBI Vide their letter Ref No.CEPD.CO.PRS.Cir.No.01/13.01.2009/20118-19 dated 03rd Sep 2018 had communicated to the Banks regarding Implementation of Internal Ombudsman Scheme 2018. Accordingly, the Bank had implemented the scheme and SOP has been formulated.

The Internal Ombudsman shall, inter alia, examine customer complaints which are in the nature of deficiency in service on the part of the Bank, (including those on the grounds of complaints listed in clause 8 of the Banking Ombudsman Scheme, 2006) that are partly or wholly rejected by the Bank.

The bank shall internally escalate all complaints within two weeks, which are partly or wholly rejected by the Bank to their respective Internal Ombudsman before conveying the final decision to the complainant. The time frame applicable for complaints referred to Internal Ombudsman will be as per the SOP framed for IO scheme. The process and procedural guidelines as per SOP shall be followed for resolving complaints that are to be referred to Internal Ombudsman.

Dealing with cases not under the purview of Internal Ombudsman:

The Bank shall directly furnish the reply to the customer complaints for cases which are not under the purview of Internal Ombudsman after ensuring the adherence of Internal Policy guidelines.

5. 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 month will give a message to the customers that the bank cares for them and values their feedback/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 feedback from customers would be valuable input for revising its product and services to meet customer requirements.

6. Sensitizing operating staff on handling complaints

Staff should be properly trained for handling complaints. We are dealing with people and hence difference of opinion and areas of friction can arise. With an open mind and a smile on the face we should be able to win the customer's confidence. Imparting soft skills required for handling irate customers, to be an integral part of the Training Programmes. It would be the responsibility of the Nodal Officer to ensure that integral 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 HR Department.

7. Disclosure of complaints:

The Bank shall adhere to the disclosure requirements of RBI as amended from time to time and also in accordance with the Board approved disclosure policy.

8. Review of Policy:

The policy shall be reviewed on an annual basis or in the interim as and when there is a change in regulatory stance.
