

Women's Aid is the national charity working to end violence against women, co-ordinating and supporting a nation-wide network of local refuge and outreach services. Our work is based on 30 years of campaigning for changes in law, policy and practice

We are an independent voluntary organisation and a registered charity and our aim is to provide a good service to all our customers. You may have suggestions for improving our services or for changes you would like to see. Please send these to us for the attention of the Deputy Chief Executive. Because we aim to work in your best interests, we have a system for dealing with any complaints or problems you may have had with our service.

### 1. Purpose

Women's Aid recognises that good customer care should be a given, and aims to set clear standards of service, regularly reviewing and improving performance. Women's Aid aims to provide the highest standard of services to all its customers.

### 2. Definitions

**Customers** include survivors of domestic violence, member services, stakeholders, funders and other individuals and organisations that work with us.

**Feedback** is classified as any comment, compliment or complaint made by a customer or stakeholder that expresses an opinion or view on the way we have delivered a service or acted in accordance with our values.

**User** is an individual who is currently using services provided by Women's Aid or its member services.

**Ex-User** is an individual who is not currently using the services provided by Women's Aid or its member services.

**Members** are organisations that deliver front line support to users, are a separate legal entity and subscribe to Women's Aid for industry guidance and best practice.

### 3. Aims & Objectives

In order to maintain good standards of customer care, Women's Aid is committed to:

- treat all customers with respect and courtesy, irrespective of their sex, age, marital status, disability, sexual orientation, race, colour, religion or national origin or any other status
- welcome feedback to improve our service and investigate any trends.
- provide customer care training for staff where necessary.
- seek to understand the requirements and specific needs of customers.
- provide accessible services wherever possible.
- ensure a confidential approach is taken at all times.
- provide customers with a copy of the Customer Care Policy and Customer Care Procedure upon request.

We will handle all comments, enquiries, compliments and complaints in a consistent, prompt and efficient manner ensuring we exercise courtesy at all times. Procedures on how to provide feedback or make a complaint are available upon request from our National Office or via our website.

If you choose to make a complaint we will:

- Deal with you in a pleasant and professional way
- Take your complaint seriously
- Keep your complaint private, and
- Not treat you differently from others just because you have made a complaint.

#### **4. Scope**

Women's Aid Services: Women's Aid can be contacted by all users, partners, commissioners of services, or any person who has the user's consent to contact us about our service such as professional advocates, carers, family members and friends. We are interested to receive your feedback, positive and negative. Any complaints about our services will be dealt with and investigated by our National Office.

Member Services: If you have complaints about our member services please be advised that they will be dealt with differently. Members are separate organisations and we are unable to investigate any complaints you may have about them. Women's Aid will always endeavour to pass on the complaint and ask the service provider to investigate and respond appropriately. There may be some sensitive situations however where this is not possible. Complaints about member services will require sensitive handling as the person making the complaint may not want the complaint to be known by the member service. Our approach for member services complaints is always to encourage the user, ex-user or their professional advocate to make contact the member organisation directly and we can assist with providing relevant contact details.

#### **5. Responsible Person**

The Deputy Chief Executive is responsible for the management and monitoring of all complaints in accordance with the Customer Care Procedure. Day to day handling and logging of all complaints is delegated to the Executive Assistant who is the initial point of contact for all Women's Aid customers seeking assistance with complaints.

#### **6. Policy Review & Audit**

This policy will be reviewed annually and updated as deemed appropriate based on the views and opinions of our users, stakeholders and funders.

We look to continuously improve our services and an audit of received feedback will be undertaken at regular intervals. Where specific pieces of work are undertaken we will seek feedback from those involved as part of the project approach.