

Customer Complaints Policy

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Customer Complaints Policy

Promoting Respect and Fairness

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Introduction

Avenue UK Limited (Avenue) is committed to providing the best possible service and aim to provide high quality services which meet your needs.

Customer satisfaction is at the forefront of our work, and although we do our very best to ensure we are meeting those high standards, we recognise that sometimes customers will feel that they have cause to complain about the service they have received.

We encourage all feedback from customers, whether good or bad; this helps us to improve our processes and services to ensure we are always providing the very best solutions for our customers. This is why we've developed our Complaints Policy and associated Complaints Procedure.

Our Complaints Policy explains our broad approach to handling all complaints, whereas our Complaints Procedure provides clear information on how individual complaints will be handled.

Aims

Avenue aims to resolve complaints quickly, fairly and effectively.

We will:

- Aim to put things right quickly for our customers when they go wrong
- Keep our customers informed of the progress of their complaint and the results of any investigation
- Seek to learn from each complaint to improve future performance
- Set performance targets for responding to complaints and monitor

our performance against these targets

- Advise our customers of their right to complain to the Ombudsman Service should they remain dissatisfied after their complaint has been through all stages of the internal Complaints Procedure

Implementation

Avenue's Complaints Policy and associated Procedure will be readily available to customers. Together, they detail how to make a complaint and the timescales for a response from Avenue.

What is a complaint?

A complaint is when a customer tells us that they are not happy with something that we have done, or not done, and we have not put things right.

Who is a customer?

A customer is anyone who engages with Avenue to request a service, or is in receipt of a service.

How can a complaint be made?

Any customer wishing to make a complaint can do so by phone, email, website or post.

What is the process for making a complaint?

The process for making a complaint is detailed in the Complaints Procedure. This is a single document for use by Avenue colleagues and customers.

Monitoring

Avenue is committed to continuous improvement in service delivery. Our Service Standards for Complaints are:

- We will make it easy and straightforward for you to make a complaint
- We will endeavour to respond to your complaint within the published timescales and keep you informed
- We will ensure you have a full explanation to your complaint in your preferred format
- We will tell you if any changes have been made to services following your complaint

As part of this commitment, a quarterly monitoring report will be prepared for the Management Team. We will also ask for your feedback on how we handled your complaint and use this information to improve our services.

We will review our complaints policy at regular intervals.

Responsibilities

The Senior Management Team and all those in managerial or supervisory roles are responsible for developing and encouraging good customer care handling practice within their teams.

Compliance with Customer Complaints Policy is the responsibility of all members of the Company who deal with customers.

Communication

Our Customer Complaints Policy is available in PDF format.

Should you wish to access this document in another format, you can contact Mike Jennings on (020772392857 or by email mj@avenue-uk.com).

Equality & Diversity

Customers have the right to express dissatisfaction with the services they receive from Avenue. Customers using this policy can be expect to be treated fairly and without discrimination.

Procedure

This Procedure is for complaints against Avenue **only** and **should not** be used for complaints against your **Energy Supplier** or **Network Operator**.

Complaints against your Energy Supplier or Network Operator

If your complaint is against your Energy Supplier or Network Operator, you need to contact them directly and log a formal complaint via their published procedures.

If you have not received a satisfactory resolution after 8 weeks (6 weeks for energy complaints against SSE) or have received a Deadlock Letter, you can escalate the complaint to the Energy Ombudsman Service. For information on their processes, visit www.ombudsman-services.org.

Complaints against Avenue

If you are unhappy with the service provided by Avenue— whether this is concerning the contracting/procurement process, information or support you are receiving and or about the staff or organisation itself - we promise to take your complaint seriously and confidentially. We aim to resolve your complaint as speedily as possible.

Compliments and complaints allow us to improve the service we provide, both for you and other customers. We are also interested in your ideas for improving our service. We use the information you give only to improve things. Passing on personal information about you is protected by the Data Protection Act & GDPR.

We will deal with all complaints quickly, courteously, and fairly. Avenue always aims to provide the highest standards of service and account management but at times mistakes can happen. If after receiving your complaint it becomes clear that a mistake has been made, you can expect any one or a combination of the following:

- An apology
- A full explanation
- Details of any appropriate remedial actions taken
- An award of compensation in appropriate circumstances

If you wish to complain, here is what you can do:

It helps if you complain straight away to the people involved, as they may be able to put things right immediately. You should make your complaint within 5 working days of the event or problem occurring.

At any stage, you can register a formal complaint by phone, email, or post giving as much information as you can including times, dates, places and names.

You can raise a complaint with Avenue via the following methods:

- Tel: 0207 729 2857
- Email: info@avenue-uk.com
- Post: Complaints Department, Avenue UK Ltd, 255 Southlands Road, Bromley, Kent. BR1 2EG

Our Complaints Handling Procedure

1. You will receive a first response within 5 working days of receipt of your complaint, and a further response within 4 weeks.
2. We will keep you regularly informed of our process and the measures being taken to resolve your complaint. If for whatever reason we are unable to resolve the complaint within four weeks from the date we received your complaint, we will issue a letter to you (a deadlock

letter) explaining why this was not possible, and indicate when we will make further contact. You are welcome to contact us at any time to check the status of our investigation.

3. If you are not satisfied by our initial response, you can escalate the complaint to the Managing Director (MD), Michael Jennings, who will undertake a full review of your complaint and look at how it has been handled thus far. It's important that you advise us of any additional information you believe may be relevant at this time.

The MD will review your complaint once more and provide you with our final response. This will be issued within 4 weeks of the date we received your escalation request.

4. If, after eight weeks, your complaint remains unresolved or you are not satisfied with our final response after escalation to the MD, we will write to you explaining why we've been unable to conclude your complaint and the options available to you.

Micro Business Customers

If you are a Micro Businesses Customer and your complaint remains unresolved, or you have received a Deadlock Letter from us, you also have the right to raise a dispute with the Ombudsman Services.

As of 1st December 2022, the Ombudsman Services becomes the designated Alternate Dispute Resolution (ADR) provider for Micro Business Customers. The Ombudsman Service provides an independent and impartial Alternative Dispute Resolution service that is free for Micro Business Customers to use. Ombudsman Services are approved by Ofgem, the UK gas and electricity regulator.

A Micro Business Customer ("Micro business consumer") is a 'relevant consumer' as defined in the Gas and Electricity Regulated Providers (Redress Scheme) Order 2008 and as further defined, from time to time, by the Gas and Electricity Markets Authority or Ofgem. As of 31 March 2014 a 'micro business' is defined as one with;

- (i) An annual consumption of electricity of not more than 100,000 kWh; or
 - (ii) An annual consumption of gas of not more than 293,000 kWh; or
 - (iii) Fewer than the equivalent of ten full time employees and an annual turnover or annual balance sheet not exceeding €2 million.
- Where the micro business receives gas and electricity supplied by the same Energy Supplier, the annual consumption of gas and electricity shall be treated separately for the purposes of determining its capacity to make a complaint to Ombudsman Services: Energy Brokers.

Please note:

- To raise a dispute with the Ombudsman Services, you must classify as a Micro Business under the above noted definitions.
- If you choose to escalate your complaint to the Ombudsman, any offer of goodwill already issued will be withdrawn. This enables them to consider your case from a neutral position and avoids confusion. They may decide on a different award which may be more or less than our original offer, or they may ask us to reinstate our offer.
- To raise a dispute, you have a time limit of 12 months from the date of the deadlock letter to approach the Ombudsman Services.

You can contact the Ombudsman Services: Energy Brokers via the following methods:

- Website: www.ombudsman-services.org
- Post: Ombudsman Services: Energy, P.O. Box 966, Warrington, WA4 8DF
- Phone: 0330 440 1624
- Email: enquiry@ombudsman-services.org