

CUSTOMER COMPLAINT AND FEEDBACK POLICY



Version March 2019

POLICY STATEMENT

This policy describes the standard of managing and maintaining a functional feedback system, and encouraging SZV's customers to provide feedback, concerning SZV's staff and service provision.

REASON FOR THIS POLICY

The Feedback Management Procedure aims to ensure procedural fairness in handling any feedback of complaints, standardize complaint investigation practices and establish mechanisms to track the amounts and types of complaints, as well as any other feedback or inquiries received about any employee or department of SZV.

DEFINITIONS

The feedback we receive:

- a) **Complaint.** SZV's definition of a complaint is *an expression of dissatisfaction or concern regarding the provision of a service, a decision or action taken by SZV as an entity, or by an individual within SZV.*
- b) **Feedback.** SZV's definition of feedback is *the provision of evaluative or corrective information about an action, event, or process to the original or controlling source*
- c) **Suggestion.** SZV's definition of a suggestion is *the provision of corrective information*
- d) **Compliment.** SZV's definition of a compliment is *an expression of respect, recognition or admiration (for an employee, service or procedure etc.)*
- e) **Complainant.** SZV's definition of a complainant is *a person, group, or company that makes a complaint.* This includes: all clients and stakeholders related to SZV and its available services.

CLASSIFICATION LEVELS OF COMPLAINTS AND INQUIRIES

Client's complaints or inquiries are classified from level 1, which are considered simple and resolvable, to level 5 complaints, which are complaints that have been appealed by the complainant or complex cases. Level 1 complaints can be resolved instantaneously or within 3- 5 working days, while level 5 complaints can take 14 working days or more to be resolved.

Where a complaint remains unresolved it may be escalated to a higher level until it is resolved, or until our involvement is no longer appropriate.

LEVEL 1

A level 1 complaint or inquiry is considered simple and/or resolvable. This is the initial contact made by a complainant, by phone, in person or through social media. These can be resolved or answered immediately, or within one to three (1-3) working days, typically by one or two SZV employees maximum.

Level 2

A level 2 complaint or inquiry This level requires some investigation with third parties such as internal and/or external stakeholders, local and/ or health care providers abroad etc. The complainant's case or inquiry is handled by one particular employee, who will liaise with the third parties on the complainant's behalf. This employee would be the assigned contact person for the complainant. Level 2 complaints can be resolved within five to ten (5-10) working days. (this may vary based on the response time from the third parties)

Level 3: Request an appointment to discuss with the complaint officer

A level 3 complaint or inquiry This level requires thorough investigation by multiple parties within SZV, with third parties which include health care providers and local and stakeholders abroad, in order to establish the facts related to the customer's provided feedback, and other entities. The SZV assigned lead along with the other parties will assess what is a fair and reasonable resolution and communicate with the customer a minimum of 2 times throughout the entire handling process, through the customer's preferred means of communication. Level 3 complaints can be resolved within ten to fourteen (10 to 14) working days (may vary based on response time from third parties)

Level 4: Request an appointment to discuss with the complaint officer

A level 4 complaint or enquiry This level is considered complex and usually follows a level 3 investigation, where the complaint or enquiry wasn't properly or thoroughly resolved, after thorough investigation by SZV. These complaints or enquiries may exceed 14 working days.

Level 5

A level 5 complaint. Complaints must be registered as level 5 when a complainant appeals a decision taken by SZV, and the case is transferred to the appeal committee. This must also take place when a case is transferred to the Ombudsman.

Feedback & complaint form

The feedback and complaint form is available on the website:

<https://www.szv.sx/info/customer-service/>

Collection

Feedback forms or any other complaints must be submitted in hardcopy to any member of the Customer Care department, on the day it is received by the complainant, or via e-mail to info@szv.sx.

Even if complaints are resolved in first instance, they must still be provided to the Customer Care Department along with the resolution, for registration and future evaluation purposes.

Follow-up

Recording, monitoring and tracking can be done by the relevant parties involved in the feedback received at any time during the handling process.

Clients have the liberty to inquire via telephone call, e-mail or Facebook messenger about the status of their complaint.

Assistance for complainants

Assistance should be provided to persons who aren't proficient in speech and writing, who wish to make a complaint,

Such assistance may include:

- Providing an interpreter if a complainant has language difficulties or is visually or hearing impaired;
- Putting their verbal grievances in writing
- Advising complainants where they can obtain further information or assistance.

Assessing a complaint

Effective management of a complainant by (frontline) SZV staff in the initial stages of a complaint being made, is critical in achieving a quick resolution to a complainant's concerns, and may prevent a complaint being escalated. All SZV employees that may receive complaints (Manager, Supervisors, Front Office Employees) and must determine the best course of action based on the nature and urgency of the complaint.

If the complaint issue does not fall within the jurisdiction of SZV, the complainant should be directed to the appropriate entity (e.g. a Government department) but must still be registered according to the relevant classification level.

Anonymous complaints

Anonymous complaints will be accepted and recorded within the feedback management register. However, there will be limitations as to how thoroughly an anonymous complaint can be investigated.

Actions taken to address a complaint

Acknowledging the complaint

A complaint is required to be acknowledged by the receiving party, using the appropriate channel immediately, or within 1-3 working days. After acknowledgement the process of registering according to the classification levels must begin.

Complainants may be contacted during the process, if verification and/or clarification of the details of a complaint or inquiry is required.

Why it is important to file a complaint?

There are two main reasons for why SZV would like to receive your complaint or feedback. Management of SZV reviews the complaints and feedback received periodically:

- To prevent the recurrence of similar complaints;
- To promote the continuous improvement of departmental services.

SZV will include the feedback received for:

- Policy and procedure review;
- Reviews of practices;
- Staff training and other professional developmental activity.

Appealing a decision or outcome

In order to appeal an official decision of SZV, there are two options:

Option 1

If a complainant is in disagreement with the decision made by SZV a written protest can be submitted to the Director of Social and Health Insurances, SZV, Sint Maarten. This must be done within six weeks after the date that the decision was issued or remitted. In the letter of protest clear mention must be made of the reasons for disagreement and also of the decision which in the customer's opinion the SZV should take. This letter must include the complainant's birthdate or identification number. The letter must be submitted in an envelope that must clearly read "letter of protest". The letter must also be signed by the complainant.

Option 2

If a complainant considers their complaint to be unresolved or remains dissatisfied with the outcome reached, they may refer their complaint to the justice system.

A written appeal can be filed with the Court Recorder of Sint Maarten. This appeal must be submitted six weeks after the date that this decision was issued or remitted. In the appeal, which must be submitted in duplicate, clear mention must be made of the reasons of disagreement and of the decision which should have been made according to the complainant. As a matter of principle a court fee will be charged when submitting an appeal by the Court Recorder.