

## Lorraine Bramwell Associates Complaints Procedure

*Lorraine Bramwell Associates actively welcomes comments both positive and negative about our service. It is very important to us that we provide a service that meets people's needs. If for any reason you're not satisfied with the service, you have received from us please tell us as soon as possible so that we can take steps to investigate any complaint and take action to rectify it where possible.*

### If you are not happy with our service.

#### Step 1

Tell the person who provided the service that you are unhappy and why. It may well be that our mediator, trainer, or member of administrative staff was not aware of your concerns and may be able to sort the matter out to your satisfaction.

#### Step 2

If you do not want to talk to the individual member of staff or have already tried this and are still not satisfied, you can make a formal complaint by writing to the Professional Practice Director, Lorraine Bramwell. Please mark your correspondence "formal complaint" so we are clear you want to make a complaint using this complaints procedure. Your formal complaint will be acknowledged within 3 working days.

#### Step 3

On receipt of your formal complaint, the Professional Practice Director will contact you by phone to discuss your concerns, talk with the members of staff involved, ensure that service policies and procedures have been adhered to and send you a letter or email outlining their findings and any corrective action that needs to be taken. We aim to send this letter or email within 28 days of receiving your formal complaint. Should circumstances beyond our control prevent us from doing this, we will let you know, together with the reason for any delay and when you will receive the outcome of our investigation.

If appropriate, and where both the complainant and mediator wish this to do so, mediation can be tried to attempt to resolve the matter.

If the mediator or trainer about whom you have a complaint is Lorraine Bramwell, another senior member of our team, will deal with the complaint. They will follow the same procedure as described above.

Complaints are held in a complaint file which is regularly reviewed to help us improve our services. Details of the complaint and the outcome of any investigation are held by us for 7 years.

### Who can make a complaint about us?

#### Complaints may be made by the following people:

- Mediation clients, including persons attending mediation information and assessment meetings or other initial consultations face to face or by phone.
- A qualifying third party who is either:-

- A prospective client who has been directly affected by a mediator's professional behaviour
- A person who has been invited to participate in a mediation process, for example another professional who attends a mediation.
- Other mediators, including Professional Practice Consultants.
- Mediators in receipt of Professional Practice Consultancy or training provided by us.

Where the complainant, due to disability, does not have the mental or physical capacity to participate in the process complaint without support, we are happy to liaise with a support person where expressly nominated by the complainant.

**A complaint must be made within three months of the practice from which the complaint arises. For complaints that relate to the way a mediation was conducted as a whole, the date the three months runs from is the last mediation session. If your complaint falls outside this time frame both we and our professional body will consider whether an exception can be made if specific criteria are met.**

**Please note that we do not investigate complaints in the following circumstances:**

- *Complaints about us contacting or not contacting a potential mediation participant after seeing the other potential mediation participant.*

This is generally part of our role in establishing the suitability of mediation but where mediation has been deemed unsuitable it may not always be appropriate to contact the other party. Similarly, mediators may sign court forms to say one person has attended a Mediation Information and Assessment Meeting (MIAM) without notifying a potential second mediation participant or inviting them to attend a MIAM themselves

- *Complaints that appear to be vexatious or of a purely personal nature.*  
We take all complaints seriously, but we are not required to investigate complaints where:-
  - the purpose appears to be to intimidate, disturb, disrupt and/or unduly or unfairly pressurise the mediator
  - they are persistent/repetitive, and repeating the same or substantially similar complaints which have already been investigated;
  - they are clearly unfounded and unsupported by evidence;
  - they are irrelevant and relate to matters other than mediation;
  - abusive or offensive language is used.

Complaints will be considered of a purely personal nature if they are discriminatory or focus on the personal attributes or circumstances of a mediator rather than their actions as a mediator.

## What if I am still unhappy after we have responded to your formal complaint?

We hope that we will be able to resolve any complaint using the above procedure. However, should you still feel, after this, that your complaint has not been addressed, you are welcome to contact our professional bodies. For non-family mediation complaints this would be the [College of Mediators](#). For family mediation complaints you should contact the [Family Mediation Standards Board \(FMSB\)](#).

In both cases The College of Mediators or FMSB will check that our own complaints process above has been exhausted and if so, will then implement its own complaints procedure.

Please note that we will be required to share information held by us that pertains to your complaint with the relevant professional body if a formal complaint is made to them.

Please also note that if you are a qualifying third party, neither mediators nor the professional body will be able to disclose any information to you that is confidential between the mediator and the mediation participant(s). It is therefore normal that as a third party, you will only receive a limited amount of information in response to your complaint.

## Contact details for a formal complaint

In the first instance please contact:-

Lorraine Bramwell, Practice Director of Lorraine Bramwell Associates

She can be contacted regarding any concern by:-

Email: [lorraine.bramwell@bestwayforward.com](mailto:lorraine.bramwell@bestwayforward.com)

Phone: 01793 887 227

Or by writing to:-

Lorraine Bramwell Associates

Park House  
Church Place  
Swindon  
SN1 5ED

## If you are still unhappy with the outcome of our investigation of your complaint

Please contact either:-

**The College of Mediators** for non-family mediation matters

Email: [admin@collegeofmediators.co.uk](mailto:admin@collegeofmediators.co.uk)

Phone: 0333 004 3234

Post: 144 Westbury Lane, Newport Pagnell, Bucks MK16 8PT

Or

**The Family Mediation Standards Board** for family mediation matters

Email: [complaints@familymediationcouncil.org.uk](mailto:complaints@familymediationcouncil.org.uk)

Phone: 01707 594055 between 9am – 3pm, Monday to Friday.