

# **Grievance policy and procedure**

## **Purpose and scope of the procedure**

The purpose of the grievance procedure is to ensure that, as far as possible, grievances are dealt with and resolved informally through discussion between the aggrieved Traveler and Travel Provider. Grievances are concerns, problems or complaints reported by a traveler and must be made in writing. However, before using the grievance procedure it is expected that a traveler will try to resolve their complaint informally if at all possible. The formal stage of the procedure should only be used when the informal stage has failed to resolve the issue or is not making progress at reasonable speed.

## **Principles of the procedure**

The procedure is based on the following principles:

- A Traveler has the right to file complaint(s) that are within a 30 day reporting period from start date of reservation to final date of reservation. Complaints filed after 30 days from last day of reservation will not result in No reimbursable compensation. Consideration other than Reimbursed compensation will be determined depending upon the scale of complaint.
- All proceedings, whether informal or formal, should, so far as is practicable, remain confidential between Traveler and Travel Provider.
- Issue resolution(s) may be extended with the agreement of the parties
- where more than one party has lodged a complaint relating to the same, or substantially the same, issue, the complaints may be dealt with together in the interests of fair and consistent decision-making. In some circumstances it may be more appropriate for the complaint to be resolved through a collective agreement between the Traveler, Travel Provider and Component provider (Hotel).

## **Informal stage**

If a traveler has a complaint that involves Travel Provider, Hotel accommodation or other party, they should first of all try to resolve the matter by direct approach with the Traveler provider using the emergency telephone numbers and contact information provider in the Travel Departure Guide or on-site Hotel staff.

If the matter remains unresolved, the traveler may request a meeting with Travel Provider who will try to resolve the issue. The meeting should be held within 10 days of the submission of the request.

If, after any action to resolve the grievance taken by the travel provider, the traveler or Hotel provider is still dissatisfied, they may proceed to the formal stage of the procedure.

### **Formal stage**

If the complaint has not been resolved at the informal stage and the Traveler wishes to proceed to the formal stage, the Traveler may do so and the complaint will be heard by all parties involved. The Traveler must set out in writing the nature of their complaint and the reasons why they are dissatisfied with the outcome of the informal stage. The Traveler should explain how they think it should be settled. This must be submitted to the complainant's Guest Services Director.

Should the complaint relate to a process or decision, the Director will appoint investigating parties who will be asked to provide a full written report together with any relevant documents. The investigation should be conducted as quickly as possible while allowing for all relevant information and evidence to be gathered. A timescale for this will be agreed between the Traveler and Travel Provider.

Should the complaint be against a named specific Hotel, Guest Services Director will give Hotel a copy of the complaint at the earliest opportunity. The Traveler will present their response at an agreed upon meeting time and it would not normally be necessary to conduct an investigation at that time.

The panel will consist of Guest Service Director, Operations Director, Partnership Operations manager(s) and all other applicable management to advise. Communication will be held within 10 working days of receipt of the complaint being received. The parties may request an alternative date to allow up to an additional five working days.

Any relevant written information or evidence must be made available to all parties at the earliest opportunity and, in any case, 24 hours before any scheduled meetings to discuss complaint.

The parties involved, in seeking to resolve the complaint, may adjourn the meeting or defer a decision if more information is required.

The decision of the panel, reasons for that decision and any redress will be communicated to Traveler who has made the complaint. Where the complaint is against Travel Provider or other party, both parties will be given a copy of the decision.

## **Right of appeal**

Should the complainant wish to appeal against the decision of the panel they must do so, in writing, to the Chief Executive within five working days of being informed of the decision.

A request for an appeal must specify the grounds of the appeal preferably under one or more of the following headings:

- the nature of any redress
- the finding of the decision on a point of fact which is pertinent to the decision of the hearing

A member of the original panel will attend to present their findings and reasons for their decision. The Traveler presenting the case presentation of their respective case statements.

The panel will hear all or part of the previous hearing depending upon the nature of the appeal. The panel has the scope to:

- uphold all or part of the previous decision
- not uphold the previous decision.

If the panel decides either to uphold only part of the previous decision or not to uphold the previous decision, it may at its discretion substitute an appropriate remedy of its own choosing.

Within three working days of the appeal the panel will record the decision to the Traveler.

The decision of the appeals panel is final.