



# **Complaints and Customer/Client Care Policy 2024**

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[Last reviewed: 4th January 2024]

## Introduction

LockRite Locksmiths Ltd (The Company) 'vision' highlights the emphasis it places on putting the customer at the centre of all its activities:

- Focus on customer care
- Quality and Excellence

This policy reflects that commitment. We all need to be aware of the daily procedures that reduce the probability of complaints occurring and help monitor the quality of the service we provide.

## Definition of a Complaint

'An expression of dissatisfaction, however made, about the standard or quality of service provided, action or lack of action, by an employee, franchisee or sub-contractor providing services for, or on behalf, of The Company.'

*(Internal complaints are dealt with in our Staff Handbook.)*

'Services' include workmanship, behaviour and attitude. Indeed, any criteria which would potentially damage the reputation or standing of the Company

## Key Principles

The Company policy is underpinned by three key principles:

### ***1) It will be responsive***

We will offer those who complain a clear response to their complaint. Responses will be provided in a timely, sensitive and sympathetic manner

### ***2) It will seek to improve service delivery***

Receipt of a complaint provides an opportunity to learn from mistakes and to provide a better service to the future. In addition there is potential to re-engage with the customer in a fashion which will repair damage that has already been caused to the Company's reputation

### ***3) It will be well managed***

Complaints will be dealt with objectively and with a problem-solving approach in an effort to attain a resolution for all parties concerned

## The Complaints Procedure

In support of our key principles the Company believes that the use of a single point of contact [SPOC] is essential in streamlining and co-ordinating complaints. To this end **all** complaints will be logged in the 'Complaint Logging' facility on the Job System and also reported to the National Accounts Manager and Compliance Officer (SPOC)

## Stage 1

- Complaint is received by phone

Staff member should reassure the customer that complaints are taken seriously and will be investigated. They should ask for brief description of the nature of the complaint and request that the customer puts the complaint in writing, either by means of letter or email, and addressed to the National Accounts Manager and Compliance Officer. The staff member should then email the details to the aforementioned SPOC.

- Complaint is received via letter

Letter should be date stamped and forwarded to the SPOC

- Complaint is received by email

Email to be forwarded to the SPOC

- Complaint is made by a National Account Client

Complaints by National Account clients are made via the phone or email. In the first instance they should be brought to the immediate attention of the Call centre Supervisor (National Accounts Supervisor) or Call Centre Supervisor (Sales)

In the first instance they should phone the complainant and ascertain if the complaint can be dealt with live time and resolved. If instant resolution is not an option, then the engineer concerned **MUST BE** requested to provide a report within the hour. Engineers need to understand that in many instances such a process is mandated in the SLA's, and failure to comply could compromise their future deployment on National Account work.

In any event (resolved or not) the complaint should be brought to the attention of the SPOC and logged accordingly.

## Stage 2

All complaints will be assessed by the SPOC for consideration of:

- \* Potential investigation – who and how
- \* Referral to outside body, i.e. HSE
- \* Requirement to brief management team

- Complaint received by phone

Assess the nature of the complaint and unless deemed urgent wait for receipt of the written confirmation. Contact the engineer informing them of the nature of the complaint and a request a report

- Complaint received by letter

Contact engineer informing of the nature of the complaint and request a report. If deemed necessary, appoint an investigating officer

- Complaint received by email

As per receipt by letter

- Complaint made by National Account Client

### ***Resolved***

Assess nature of complaint and consider any further action required, i.e. note on engineers file, suspend from National Account work, further training etc.

### ***Unresolved***

Assess the nature of the complaint, review the engineer's report, and if deemed necessary appoint an investigating officer. Consideration will be given to suspending engineer from National Account work, or just work for which the complaint refers

### **Stage 3**

Investigation will be conducted by the SPOC or an agent of his/her choosing.

If complaint made is regards to a member of the Management Team, the matter will be referred to the Managing Director who provides the decision as to who is appropriate for the investigation

All investigations need to be an appropriate and proportionate response to the nature of the complaint

If assessment suggests the complaint is so serious that it constitutes a criminal offence then in consultation between the SPOC and the Managing Director the decision will be made, as per legal obligation, to refer the investigation to an appropriate law enforcement agency such as the Police, or HSE

Investigations should be conducted in an objective manner which:

- Searches for the truth
- Seeks to confirm or deny the complaint
- All investigations should also be conducted:
  - Sympathetically
  - Transparently
  - Expeditiously, and with a view to providing

### ***Resolutions acceptable to all parties concerned***

On many occasions a customer seeks but two outcomes:

- An explanation
- An apology

It is sometimes appropriate to admit wrongdoing and apologise – where appropriate, do not be risk averse to saying “sorry”.

At the point an investigator is appointed they must make contact with the customer within 2 working days. Thereafter they should provide updates agreed with the customer at intervals which suit their needs. This agreement should be audited by means of an email.

#### **Stage 4**

At the conclusion of the investigation, and upon reaching a finding, the investigator must provide the customer with a timely update. The manner in which this communication is made should form part of the agreement indicated above

Following this process, the engineer must be informed of the finding on the same working day as the customer.

It will not always be possible to appease all customers - findings and sanctions may not be acceptable to them. In such circumstances, if negotiation is not an option, or reaches an impasse, then customers should be informed of other avenues which may assist them, i.e.

- Citizen’s Advice Bureau
- Legal/Solicitor
- Arbitration – as per the “Arbitration Act 1996.”

#### **Sanctions – Territory Allocated Work**

Other than ‘making good payments’, applying sanctions against franchisees will rarely be applicable, generally only if their behaviour was deemed criminal or serious enough to bring the company into disrepute. All such matters will be relayed by the SPOC to the Managing Director for decision.

In some instances it may be possible to improve the situation by persuading the engineer in question to a certain course of conduct, i.e. additional training.

All substantiated complaints will be summarised and placed in the ‘notes’ section of the engineers’ files.

#### **Sanctions – National Account Work**

The acquisition and retention of National Contracts is an important feature for the Company and central to how it seeks to develop (see National Accounts Operational Policy). It is critical that the services we provide are customer focused. Where an engineer is deemed to be ‘at fault’ and a complaint substantiated the SPOC will liaise with Head of National Accounts.

These individuals will assess each complaint, taking into account and into context, their general performance in the services they provide across all account work. They will consider a range of options including:

- Verbal warning – note in their file
- Mandatory training (if to continue account work)

- Suspension from account work (specific to account where complaint occurred)
- Suspension from all account work

All such decisions will be based on the principles of appropriateness and proportionality. Any appeal to such a sanction must be made, in writing, to the Managing Director.

### **Stage 5 or Learning the lessons**

The complaints process is not necessarily a completely negative field. By adopting the SPOC approach the Company will use complaints, both substantiated and unsubstantiated, as an opportunity to change processes, procedures and training regimes in order to prevent future occurrences and to improve service levels.

In addition, the Company will adopt a process which seeks to gather customer feedback, both positive and negative. This will be implemented by the use of our customer survey currently delivered by the Call Centre.

Subject to statutory changes this policy will be reviewed by the National Accounts Manager and Compliance Officer on an annual basis

**MAKING A COMPLAINT;** In the first instance any concern or problem should be raised with a member of staff who may be able to resolve the situation immediately. If this is not possible or does not resolve the issue the customer should adopt the formal procedure of submitting a complaint in writing. Written complaints should be made to: The Director, LockRite Locksmiths Ltd, 8 Christow Road, Marsh Barton Industrial Estate, Exeter EX2 8QP.

They can be emailed on enquiries@lockrite.org LockRite Locksmiths Ltd will acknowledge receipt of a complaint within 5 working days, and to respond, detailing the actions to be taken within 15 days of receiving the written complaint. Following the resolution of the complaint LockRite Locksmiths Ltd will review the processes and procedures to identify changes, staff training or communication that would improve the processes and customer service.

*\*Customer satisfaction is paramount and will always remain a key objective of the company's values.*

**Last Revision Date: 04/01/24**

**Mark Green – HSEQ Manager.**

**Endorsed by – Philip Hargreaves (Managing Director)**

**Date: 04/01/24**

