Interpreting Solutions is committed to providing a high quality service to everyone we deal with. In order to do this, we need you to give us any comments about our service, and to tell us when we get things wrong. We want to help you resolve your complaint as quickly as possible.

Interpreting Solutions will always listen to your complaints, treat them seriously, and learn from them so that we can continuously improve our service.

# What is a complaint?

We define a complaint as expression of dissatisfaction with any part of our service.

## Our policy covers complaints about:

1. the standard of service we provide
2. the behavior of our staff, and
3. any action or lack of action by staff affecting an individual or group

## Our complaints policy does not cover

* 1. matters that have already been fully investigated through this complaints procedure, or
  2. anonymous complaints

## Our standards for handling complaints

* We treat all complaints seriously, whether they are made by telephone, by letter, by fax, or by email.
* You will be treated with courtesy and fairness at all times. We would hope this is reciprocated and that you will be courteous and fair in your dealings with our staff at all times.
* We will treat your complaint in confidence within the Company and with associated partners.
* We will deal with your complaint promptly. We will acknowledge receipt of a written complaint within five working days and we will send you a full reply within 20 working days of receipt. If we are unable to send a full reply within 20 working days of receipt we will explain to you the reason why, informing you know when expect a comprehensive reply in full.

We are committed to upholding all of your rights and protected characteristics under the Equality Act 2010, and will not discriminate against you because of your:

* age;
* disability;
* gender reassignment;
* marriage and civil partnership;
* pregnancy and maternity;
* race;
* religion or belief;
* sex;
* sexual orientation.

## Third Party Reporting

Complainants may wish to have a third party act on their behalf. A third party is any person or organisation acting on behalf of or making enquiries for the complainant. Representatives may include:

1. advice organisations,
2. professionals such as social workers, community psychiatric nurses or doctors, solicitors,
3. family members or friends,
4. MPs and elected members of the Council - customers' own MPs and elected members are assumed to have consent to act and information can be disclosed in response to their enquiries,
5. Legal representative who is legally empowered to act on behalf of the complainant and consent to disclose information is not required.

Where a third party is helping a complainant with a particular complaint and written authority is held to that effect, if the representative asks to be kept informed of progress on the complaint all possible steps will be taken to ensure that this happens.

## Confidentiality

All complaints received will be dealt with confidentially and in accordance with the requirements of the data protection act 1998.

# How to Complain

You can make a complaint to the addresses in section 9 below in a number of ways:

* By telephone
* By email
* In writing by letter or the company ‘Complaints Form’
* By online webcam chat (FaceTime, Skype, WhatsApp Video)

We have a two-stage complaints procedure. At each stage it will help us to resolve your complaint quickly if you can give us as much clear detail as possible, including any documents and correspondence and stating that you are making a complaint in line with our procedure.

# The stages of the complaints procedure

## Stage1

This is the first opportunity to resolve a complainant’s dissatisfaction, and the majority of complaints will be resolved at this stage. In the first instance, we will try to get your complaint resolved by the Head of the department against whom the complaint has been made. Upon receipt of your complaint we will contact the relevant team Head and ask them to deal with your complaint.

## Stage2

If you are dissatisfied with this response you may request an escalation review by a Senior Manager your request should be sent to the Chief Executive’s Office at each stage, please send your complaint or request for a review to the address below

## Timescales for handling a complaint

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Stage 1** | **Stage 2** |
| Maximum 20 working days Acknowledgement within 5 working days Full response within 20 working days. | Maximum 20 working days from stage 1 complaint with an acknowledgement within 5 working days.  Full response within 20 working days of Stage 1 escalation request. |

**Appeals**

An Appeal should be submitted in writing within 28 days of the complaint outcome. We will acknowledge receipt of your appeal within 5 days. An investigation will be conducted by the Chief Executive, if we require further information from you or anticipate a delay in responding, we will write to advise you.

If a complainant wishes to appeal against a decision in relation to a registered Professional working with Interpreting Solutions, they may raise this with the appropriate registering body in line with their Code of Conduct and or Complaints Procedure:

NRCPD - National Register of Communication Professionals working with Deaf & Deafblind People ASLI - Association of Sign Language Interpreters

RBSLI - Regulatory Body of Sign Language Interpreters VLP - Visual Language Professionals

If the complaint appeal is against a member of Interpreting Solutions Staff and or the service provided by Interpreting Solutions, you may, if you wish contact:

The Ombudsman Association PO Box 343

Carshalton SM5 9BX

Where you may find an independent arbitrator to investigate or adjudicate on the matter.

## Extending time limits

We aim to complete all complaints within the timescales above; however, if a complaint is very complex it may occasionally be necessary to extend the time limit. If this is the case we will keep the complainant informed of progress with the investigation, the reasons for the delay, and inform them of the new deadline.

Following any stage of the procedure, a complainant has a maximum of 28 days from the date of the final response to request that their complaint be progressed

# Remedies

When we get things wrong we will act to:

1. accept responsibility
2. explain what went wrong and why, and
3. put things right by making any changes required.

# Comments

Quality of service is an important measure of the effectiveness of our service. Therefore, we believe that learning from complaints is a powerful way of helping to develop the Company and increase trust among the people who use our services. As well as learning from your complaints we are also interested in other ideas you may have on how we might do things better. We would also like you to tell us when we do things well.

You can make your comments by telephoning or writing to any members of our staff, or alternatively you can email us if this is your preferred method, if you are a BSL user we can arrange for your complaint to be relayed through an interpreter to one of our Heads of Department. We will always use your comments to help improve our service and the way we do things.

# Recording complaints

We log all complaints we receive so we can monitor the types of problems, the best way to resolve them and how long we are taking to deal with them. This also helps us to take a closer look at how we can improve our own service delivery. We will handle your information in line with data-protection legislation.

**Contacting us**

All complaints and requests for review under our complaints procedures should be sent to the following address:

Interpreting Solutions 2(UK) Ltd

Suite 6, Alderman Gatley House

2 Hale Top

Manchester

M22 5RQ

Following any stage of the procedure, a complainant has a maximum of 28 days from the date of the final response to request that their complaint be progressed