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Complaints Policy and Procedure

1 Policy Statement

The purpose of this policy is to provide a clear statement of intent with regards to the assessment, handling and investigation of customer complaints. Vanango's complaint handling policy and procedure has been created to meet general standards and requirements and complies with standard compliant handling procedures.

The aim of this policy is to ensure that all customer complaints, either written or verbal, are handled in a consistent and regulated manner and that further complaint incidents are mitigated and where possible, prevented. Where a customer has cause to complain, the complaints handling procedure will be followed in every instance and a record will be made of the complaint nature and details to help improve our services and reduce the occurrence of similar complaints.

2 Purpose

Vanango are committed to delivering a fair, open and clear process for complaints and ensure a satisfactory outcome for all customers who raise a complaint. We provide thorough staff training in our internal complaint handling procedures and support our staff in how to handle complaint situations in a face-to-face, written and/or telephone environment.

This policy sets out our intent and objectives for how we handle complaints, from offering a clear and approachable system for customers to complain, through to conducting root cause analysis on all complaints received to identify the cause, issues and corrective actions regarding the complaint, and to implement measures to prevent reoccurrences where applicable.

3 Objectives

Vanango's objectives are laid out below regarding customer complaint handling. For the purposes of this policy, a complaint is defined as any customer contact whereby a negative communication or outcome has occurred. The customer does not have to formally address their communication as an official complaint or to request a response for Vanango to treat the incident as a complaint and to follow the related procedures.

Vanango's objectives for internal complaint handling are:

- To provide a fair complaints procedure which is clear and easy to use for anyone wishing to make a complaint
- To ensure that our complaints procedure is fully accessible so that people know how to contact us to make a complaint
- To make sure everyone at Vanango knows what to do if a complaint is received
- To make sure all complaints are investigated fairly and in a timely way
- To gather information which helps us to improve what we do and how we do it
- To ensure that the Office Manager is involved in any complaints relating to personal data

Vanango's objectives for the complaint handling process are:

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- Complaints will be investigated and responded to within 8 weeks from the initial customer contact
- Customers will be sent a copy of the formal complaints
- Complaint responses will always be provided in writing (unless the complainant makes a specific request for an alternate form of communication, which will be provided in addition to the written format)
- All complaints will be investigated by the appropriate member of staff and a full outcome summary provided to Senior Management
- Complaint records will be used to revise company procedures and to improve communication and business practices where applicable

4 Procedures & Guidelines

4.1 Raising a Complaint

Customers who request Vanango's complaint handling procedure will be provided a copy of the procedure and form either by email, in a .pdf format or in the post, and will be asked to raise their complaint in writing as soon as possible after the incident.

NOTE: Complaints are to be raised in writing, however verbal complaints will be accepted and dealt with as per the same procedures.

If a customer telephones Vanango and wishes to raise a complaint, they should be passed through to a senior member of staff who will try to resolve the complaint then and there.

Even if the complaint is resolved at the time, the customer must still be offered the option of receiving the complaints handling procedure and form prior to ending the call and the call recording must be retained and logged in the complaints record.

4.1.1 Data Protection Related Complaints

Where a complaint is related to the processing of personal data, this policy ensures that Vanango complies with the data protection laws and notification requirements.

Every individual has the right to lodge a complaint with the supervisory authority (ICO) where they consider that the processing of personal data relating to them infringes the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) or we have breached data protection law. All individuals using our products or services and those employed by us are notified of this right via our Privacy Notice, in our complaint handling procedures and in our information disclosures.

4.2 Informal Complaint Resolution

Vanango considers and responds to all complaints and issues, no matter how they are raised or what they refer to. Some issues and complaints we can resolve immediately or within a 5-working day timeframe and are referred to as informal complaints. Such instances are where an investigation is not required because the nature of the complaint is clear, and a resolution can be obtained without further review of the facts. Where we resolve a complaint within the timeframe, the details are still logged on our complaint register, and the complainant is still informed of their rights.

Vanango takes every opportunity to resolve complaints at the first initial point of contact where feasible and possible. Informal resolution is always attempted where the issues raised are straightforward and potentially easily resolved, requiring little or no investigation. Most face to face and telephone issues can be resolved in this manner, however the complainant is always offered the option of making the complaint formal if the resolution is not to their satisfaction.

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Where an informal complaint is received, it is acceptable for the point of contact or addressed employee to attempt to resolve the issue without involving Senior Management. However, any issue relating to data protection infringes or breaches, no matter how small or informal, are always brought to the attention of the Office Manager.

4.2 Timeframe for Informal Resolution

It is the aim of Vanango to resolve informal complaints immediately, or at least within the first 72-hours. Such complaints and issues will have a quick, but informative response and do not need to have an investigation or enter the formal complaint process.

4.3 Responding to a Complaint

Where an official complaint has been received or the informal complaint was unable to be resolved at the frontline point of contact, a written acknowledgement is sent to the customer within 3 working days. The response should detail the complaint handling procedure and provide approximate timelines and expectations for the investigation and future responses.

Senior Management are the only staff members who should respond to customers regarding their complaints.

4.4 Investigating the Complaint

The designated employee will be assigned the role of investigating complaints and will gather all necessary documents, recordings and information to make an independent review of the incident.

If internal interviews are to be conducted, a note taker will be present alongside the investigator and interviewee and a copy of the interview notes will be written up and signed by the interviewer and interviewee prior to them being added to the complaint history.

All investigations must take place with 6-weeks of the initial complaint being received so that a final response (decision letter) can be sent to the customer within our designated 8-week period.

Investigations must utilise all the facts and any previous, related information to produce an unbiased outcome and an expected course of action. A complaint reference should be assigned and all documents relevant to the complaint should have the reference written on them for continuity.

The reference will also be added to the Complaints Register so that complaint and documents can be audited and traced back in the future.

All employees are provided with clear guidelines of when a complaint is formal and requires an appropriate investigation.

4.5 Decision Letter (Final Response)

After the complaint has been investigated in full and an outcome and action decision has been reached, the investigator or Senior Management will draft a final response letter to the customer with their findings and decision regarding any action(s) to be taken or compensation awarded.

The final response must be sent within 8 weeks of the initial response being raised and will also specify the complainant's right to refer or lodge the complaint with the appropriate body (where applicable) should the customer be unhappy with the decision received.

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For complaints related to personal data and/or breaches of the data protection laws and regulations, the final response will reiterate the complainant's right to lodge a complaint with the supervisory authority (the Information Commissioners Office) and will detail the ICO's telephone number and address.

5 BVRLA Dispute Resolution Service

Unresolved disputes may be referred to the BVRLA by either the customer or the member involved. Details should be submitted online at <https://bvrla.co.uk/consumer-advice/making-a-complaint-adr.html>.

If the customer does not have access to the internet, details can be sent by post to:

British Vehicle Rental & Leasing Association
River Lodge, Badminton Court
Amersham, HP7 0DD

The BVRLA will aim to resolve the matter using the information presented by both parties to the dispute. Any information requested from the member should be sent to the BVRLA within five working days. Based on the information available, the BVRLA will provide both parties with its findings and recommendations. The BVRLA aims to resolve complaints through the Dispute Resolution Service within 30 days.

What is covered under the Dispute Resolution Service?

The Dispute Resolution Service will investigate potential breaches of this Code of Conduct, which sets out the standards the BVRLA expects from its members. The Dispute Resolution Service can only look at matters that relate to disputes arising from the activities of BVRLA members.

6 Complaint Recording

All complaints, whether formal or informal, are recorded on a Customer Complaint Register. The register should consist of the below information and should be audited on a frequent basis to ensure that incidents are not being repeated and improvements are being made.

- Date
- Nature of Complaint
- Department(s) Involved
- Complaint Reference
- Lead Investigator
- Decision Letter Sent (Y/N)
- Date Complaint Closed