



Complaints Reporting, Handling and Management

A24Group **Smart Staffing Solutions**

The A24 Group are committed to providing exceptional service to both our clients and candidates. However, we understand that there may be occasions where concerns or complaints arise. This Complaints Reporting, Handling, and Management Procedure outlines the process for reporting, handling, and resolving complaints effectively and efficiently.

COMPLAINTS REPORTING & MANAGEMENT

Complaints can be reported by clients, candidates, or any other relevant parties. Complaints may be related to our services, interactions with staff, or any other aspect of our operations. Complaints can be submitted via: Email: complaints@a24group.com

All complaints will be documented promptly upon receipt. Once received by the booking our consultants, are immediately escalated to senior management. Any complaint which impacts on patient safety, where service users have been placed at risk or any form of abuse would automatically qualify as a serious or major complaint. Minor complaints would generally be around admin type issues. Examples would be arriving late, bad attitude, uniforms, use of mobile phones on shift, etc. However, sleeping on duty would not be a minor complaint as it potentially places services users at risk.

The complaints procedure can be briefly summarised as per below:

It is extremely important to note that the deadlines set for the handling of complaints by clients overrides any deadlines set below.

- Within two (2) working days of receipt of a complaint from the client or agency worker, the A24 Group will acknowledge receipt of the complaint. In practice this should happen immediately or as soon as possible given the particular circumstances. The complaint should be made in writing on the A24 Group's form, this is available from each of our agencies directly or can be downloaded from our website www.a24group.com.
- The complaint will be assigned to the appropriate department or individual for investigation. This may involve gathering additional information, speaking with relevant parties, and reviewing relevant documentation.
- All reasonable endeavours will be made by the A24 Group to ensure that all complaints are resolved within ten (10) days of the complaint being notified to the A24 Group.
- The A24 Group shall ensure that in the event of the complaint being against an agency worker that the agency worker is fully informed of complaints relating to him/her. The agency worker shall be entitled to receive a copy of the complaint referred to in paragraph 1.
- The agency worker will be afforded the opportunity to state his/her version of events and will be given seven (7) days to respond to the A24 Group in writing (response falling within the 10-day resolution period).
- All responses will be shared with the complainant and if appropriate, the A24 Group will take demonstrable action to ensure there is no re-occurrence of the act or omission complained of.
- The client may at any time request the A24 Group to provide the client with an update as to the progress of the resolution of the complaint.
- The client will receive a written response from the A24 Group, detailing how the complaint has been resolved.
- When there is evidence of malpractice or the complaint is an event that requires notification, the A24 Group will immediately notify the CQC, The Police, The Disclosure and Barring Service or Safeguarding as appropriate and where applicable alert the agency workers professional body.
- The A24 Group where necessary; will immediately exclude the agency worker from its register whilst an investigation is in progress.
- The A24 Group undertakes to work with all parties applicable to an investigation and where necessary share findings of such investigations.
- A full written record of the nature of each complaint and details of the action taken as a result of the complaint, is kept on a secure database for easy access;
- If the complainant is not satisfied with the initial resolution, they may request escalation. In such cases, the complaint will be reviewed by a senior member of management who will conduct a further investigation and attempt to reach a satisfactory resolution.
- All complaints will be handled with the utmost confidentiality, and information will only be shared with those directly involved in the resolution process.
- The A24 Group has a quality assurance system in place to analyse and identify any patterns in complaints and trend analysis is conducted continuously.
- The complainant at any time has the right to refer this matter for review to the Care Quality Commission – England.

Risk Committee:

In certain cases, the complaint is brought before the Risk Committee to decide on the outcome. The Risk Committee meet at least once a week and comprises senior management staff and clinicians. The Risk Committee was created as a means to ensuring that serious complaints are dealt with fairly and objectively by an experienced team that are independent from the parties involved in the complaint. The Risk Committee also oversee all safeguarding matters and referrals to the relevant professional bodies to ensure that appropriate action is taken.

The Risk Committee receives a daily Enterprise report of all current open complaints and these are monitored to ensure that complaints are dealt with timeously.

DISCIPLINARY PROCEDURE

The Disciplinary and Grievance procedures are designed to help and encourage all employees to achieve and maintain appropriate standards of conduct, attendance and job performance. The company rules and these procedures apply to all agency staff. The aim is to ensure consistent and fair treatment for all in the organisation.

Principles:

- No disciplinary action will be taken against an agency worker until the case has been fully investigated. The amount of investigation required will depend on the nature of the allegations and will vary from case to case.

- The Company may suspend an agency worker without pay while an investigation takes place. Such a suspension will be reviewed as soon as possible and will not normally exceed [10] working days. Suspension of this kind is not a disciplinary penalty and does not imply any decision has been made about the allegations.
- Agency staff will not be dismissed for a first breach of discipline except in the case of gross misconduct (when the penalty may be dismissal without either notice or payment in lieu of notice).
- Misconduct will generally fall into two categories, namely “general” misconduct (in respect of which the general disciplinary action procedure described below applies) and “gross” misconduct, which is of so serious a nature that it justifies instant dismissal for a first offence. Listed below are examples which would normally be considered to be either general misconduct or gross misconduct. However, it should be recognised that neither list can be regarded as complete to meet every case, and also that action described as general misconduct may amount to and be treated as gross misconduct if the circumstances or the manner of the misconduct are such as to warrant serious disciplinary action. These lists should be regarded therefore as being illustrative rather than exhaustive.

Examples of “gross” misconduct:

Summary dismissal (i.e. dismissal without notice or pay in lieu of notice) may be necessary in cases of gross misconduct. For guidance, the following are examples of the offences which may be regarded as gross misconduct and will normally result in summary dismissal. It is emphasised that this is not an exhaustive list:

- Unauthorised use or disclosure of confidential information or business matters relating to the Company, its clients, temporary workers or applicants.
- Breach of the Data Protection Laws or the Company’s Data Protection Policy.
- Acts of violence, including physical assault, unlawful discrimination, drunkenness, taking of non-prescribed drugs in such a way as to impair the ability to carry out work or conduct of any kind which endangers the health and safety of others.
- Any bullying or harassment of fellow employees, clients, candidates or any other person.
- A criminal offence committed at work other than a minor road traffic offence committed in the course of the employment, or an offence committed outside work which is incompatible with the employee remaining in the Company’s employment.
- Falsification of information or references during onboarding.
- Theft or fraudulent activity.
- Unauthorised absence or gross negligence in the performance of duties.
- Breach of the Company’s Anti-Bribery and Corruption Policy.
- Breach of the Criminal Finances Act 2017.
- Any conduct tending to bring the Company, or the client into disrepute or which results in the loss of custom of a client, or a loss of business.
- Working for or assisting a competitor of the company or seeking to establish a business which is likely to compete with the company or divulging confidential information concerning the company and its business.
- Serious insubordination or refusal to obey a lawful instruction in connection with the employment.
- Deliberate and serious damage to property or causing any loss, damage or injury through negligence.

Examples of “general” misconduct:

The following may be regarded as reasons for disciplinary action in that they deviate from accepted standards and constitute general misconduct. The employee’s first offence will usually result in a written warning. Repetition of offences following a warning could lead to a final written warning as appropriate. Thereafter any repetition will result in dismissal. It is again emphasised that this is not an exhaustive list:

- Poor job performance.
- Poor time-keeping.
- Failure to comply with the conditions of your employment contract and/or handbook.
- Unseemly or disruptive conduct.

GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE

If an agency staff has a problem or concern about their work, working conditions or a relationship with a colleague, this must be reported to the agency immediately.

The staff member must set out their grievance in writing and send this statement to their agency representative, unless their grievance concerns their representative, then this should be submitted to the aforementioned complaints email. This must include all facts, dates, a chronology and names of individuals, as appropriate. The subject heading should be marked as “Formal Grievance”.

The Company will inform the agency staff of its decision, as soon as reasonably practicable (but normally within one week of the meeting), and the Company will notify the employee of his right to appeal if he is not satisfied with it.

Appeal:

If the agency staff does wish to appeal, s/he must inform the Company within 5 working days of receiving the decision, and on doing so the Company will invite him/her to attend a further meeting. The appeal meeting may not necessarily take place before the dismissal or disciplinary action takes effect but it will be arranged within a reasonable period of time.

After the appeal meeting, the Company will inform the employee of its final decision in writing, as soon as reasonably possible (but normally within one week of the meeting). The Company may uphold or revoke the original decision or substitute a different penalty.