

Complaints Handling & Escalation Procedure

Purpose

To provide a clear, proportionate, and effective process for receiving, managing, and escalating complaints or incidents reported to Secure Team Security Ltd, ensuring prompt resolution, accountability, and clear communication with clients and internal management.

1. Receiving Complaints

How complaints can be received

Complaints may be received by:

- Telephone
- Email
- In person
- Anonymous submission (e.g., anonymous email or form)

Upon receiving a complaint

The person receiving the complaint must:

1. Acknowledge receipt immediately (where contact details are provided):

- Inform the complainant that their concern is being investigated.
- Clarify that they will be updated on progress and outcome.

2. Record complaint details:

- Date and time
- Method received
- Nature of complaint
- Site name and officer(s) involved (if applicable)
- Complainant's details (unless anonymous)

3. Anonymous Complaints

- Must still be logged and dealt with fully.
- Record as "Anonymous" in complainant field, with all other known details.
- Treat the substance of the complaint the same as any other.
- If details are insufficient, investigate what information *can* be obtained.

4. Urgency and Severity Assessment

- Determine if the issue is urgent, serious, or safety related.

5. Logging

- All complaints must be logged in the company scheduling/operations system or a dedicated complaint log.
- Link to relevant site and officer records for traceability.

2. Immediate Action and Resolution

If the issue can be resolved quickly (e.g., officer replacement, clarification), take action without delay:

- Take appropriate corrective steps.
- Gather relevant facts (rosters, logs, availability, witness accounts).
- Log actions taken, including:
 - Who took them
 - When they were taken
- Update complaint log/system.
- Inform the **Operations / Control Room Manager**.
- If contact details are available, advise the complainant of the action taken.

The Control Room need not complete a full investigation before taking immediate action, but must document sufficient detail for any follow-up.

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3. Informing Clients

Even if resolved within **30–60 minutes**, the Control Room must:

- Send a summary email of the complaint and resolution to:
 - **Operations / Control Room Manager**
 - **Client Relationship Manager (if assigned)**
- Log the entire incident and resolution in the system.
- Confirm resolution with the complainant where possible.

Minor issues resolved quickly do not require further escalation but *must be recorded and communicated*.

4. Escalation Process

A complaint must be escalated immediately if it:

- Cannot be resolved within **1 hour**
- Requires management authority
- Is serious, safety-related, or an emergency
- May affect the company's reputation or client relationship

Step 1 – Escalation to Operations / Control Room Manager

- Forward all relevant emails or provide a written summary of phone calls.
- Include details of actions already taken.
- Make direct contact by phone where possible.
- Update the scheduling / complaint system to reflect escalation.

Step 2 – Escalation to Director (if required)

If the Operations Manager is unavailable or the issue requires higher authority, escalate to a Company Director.

All information must be passed clearly and promptly, and records updated accordingly.

Weekend / Out-of-Hours Escalation

- Follow the Duty Manager or Director contact arrangements.
- Use the same escalation steps.
- Ensure full system logging once access is available.

5. Communication Protocol

- All complaint communication must be logged and transparent.
- Telephone complaints must be followed up in writing (email/internal summary).
- Logs must include:
 - Site name
 - Officer name(s)
 - Timeline of events
 - Actions taken
 - Outcomes or escalation notes

Clients must:

- Be acknowledged immediately
- Be updated when action is taken
- Be informed if escalation is necessary

Anonymous complainants cannot be updated, but the outcomes of complaints that affect them must be recorded internally.

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6. Legal and Best Practice Considerations

This process aligns with relevant UK legislation and guidance, including:

- **Data Protection Act 2018 / UK GDPR** — ensuring personal data in complaints is handled lawfully
- **Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974** — for safety-related complaints
- **Employment Rights Act 1996** — ensuring fair handling of complaints involving personnel
- **SIA Licensing Regulations** — ensuring operational compliance (where applicable)
- **ACAS guidance on grievance and complaint handling** — best practice communications

7. Summary Table of Actions

Scenario	Action Required	Notify / CC	Escalation Needed?	Log Update?	Client Update?
Resolved within 30–60 mins	Immediate action	Ops Manager & Client Rep	No	Yes	Yes
>1 hour to resolve	Escalate to Ops Manager	CC Client Rep	Yes	Yes	Yes
Serious / emergency	Immediate escalation	Ops Manager & Client Rep	Yes	Yes	Yes
Ops Manager unavailable	Escalate to Director	CC Client Rep	Yes	Yes	Yes
Anonymous	Record + investigate	Ops Manager	Yes/No (depending)	Yes	N/A

8. Review and Accountability

- All complaints and escalations are subject to regular review by management.
- Patterns or repeat issues will trigger:
 - Root cause analysis
 - Process improvements
 - Training or disciplinary action
- Use of complaint logs will be audited periodically to check:
 - Completeness
 - Timeliness
 - Accuracy