

Clare Newton ADR & Mediation Services Limited

Complaints Procedure

1. Purpose

This procedure ensures that all complaints about the conduct of mediators, staff, or the administration of mediations are handled fairly, promptly, and in accordance with the Civil Mediation Council (CMC) requirements.

It applies to all mediations and training activities administered under the organisation's name.

2. Scope

A complaint may be made by any party or representative who:

- Participated in a mediation conducted by a mediator registered or appointed by the organisation; or
 - Used any of the organisation's mediation or training services.
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3. Guiding Principles

- **Accessibility:** The complaints process will be made available on request and published on the organisation's website.
 - **Fairness:** Complaints will be handled impartially, without discrimination or retaliation.
 - **Confidentiality:** All complaints will be treated as confidential except where disclosure is required by law or consented to by the complainant.
 - **Transparency:** Complainants will be kept informed of progress and outcomes.
 - **Compliance:** The process aligns with the Civil Mediation Council's Registration and Conduct Standards.
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4. Stages of the Procedure

Stage 1 – Informal Resolution

Where possible, concerns should be raised directly with the mediator or staff member involved, within **28 days** of the incident.

The mediator or manager will seek to resolve the matter informally within **14 days**.

If the issue cannot be resolved informally, the complainant may proceed to Stage 2.

Stage 2 – Formal Complaint

Formal complaints should be made in writing to the organisation's sole Director.

The complaint should include:

- The name and contact details of the complainant
- Details of the mediation or event in question (date, mediator's name, parties involved)
- A clear description of the complaint and the outcome sought

Acknowledgement of receipt will be issued within **5 working days**.

An investigation will be carried out by an independent manager or mediator who was **not involved** in the matter complained of.

A written response, setting out findings and reasons, will be provided within **21 days** of acknowledgment.

If more time is required, the complainant will be notified in writing.

Stage 3 – Appeal

If the complainant is dissatisfied with the Stage 2 outcome, they may appeal in writing within **14 days** to the organisation's sole Director who will appoint an Independent Reviewer from outside of the organisation if necessary.

The appeal will be reviewed on the basis of:

- Whether the complaints procedure was followed correctly
- Whether the outcome was reasonable in the circumstances

A final written decision will be provided within **21 days** of the appeal being received.

This concludes the organisation's internal procedure.


5. Referral to the Civil Mediation Council

If the complaint concerns a **CMC-registered mediator** and:

- It has been through all internal stages; and
- The complainant remains dissatisfied; or
- The complaint raises issues of professional misconduct or breach of the CMC's Code of Conduct,

the complainant may refer the matter to the **Civil Mediation Council** at:

 **complaints@civilmediation.org**

 www.civilmediation.org

Complaints must normally be referred to the CMC **within one month** of the internal process concluding.

6. Record Keeping

All complaints and related correspondence will be retained securely for **six years** and may be reviewed periodically to identify areas for improvement.

7. Review

This procedure is reviewed annually to ensure continued compliance with the Civil Mediation Council's Standards Framework and any subsequent guidance.