

COMPLAINTS POLICY

Fair process. Clear reasons. Real accountability.

Version 1.2 | Updated 12 October 2026 | Previous revision 30 September 2026

A genuine complaint should be examined on its evidence, not dismissed for challenging RFTUK.

How to complain: [Contact Us page](#) | [Public complaints form](#) | complaints@rightfirsttimeuk.com

1. Purpose and scope

Right First Time UK Ltd (RFTUK) believes that complaints are an important part of fairness, accountability and service improvement. We consider genuine complaints on their evidence, even where criticism is strong or uncomfortable.

This policy covers RFTUK websites, communications, publications, campaigns, events, membership and subscriber services, fundraising, safeguarding, personal-data handling, and the conduct of Directors, Campaign Leaders, Campaigners, Volunteers, employees and other authorised representatives.

A complaint is an expression of dissatisfaction with something RFTUK did, did not do, published or decided. You do not have to call it a “complaint” for us to recognise it. Where the purpose of a message is unclear, we will try to clarify it.

2. What we can and cannot resolve

You can complain about unfair treatment, behaviour, discrimination, poor communication, incorrect information, privacy, accessibility, misuse of authority or resources, safeguarding, donations, governance or another aspect of RFTUK’s own activities.

We cannot decide a complaint about a separate organisation, such as DWP, the Child Maintenance Service, a council, court, employer or healthcare provider. We may signpost the appropriate complaint, appeal or advice route. An RFTUK complaint does not provide legal representation, guarantee a remedy or pause another organisation’s legal deadline.

3. How to make a complaint

Use our official [Contact Us page](#) and select the complaint option, or use the [public complaints form](#). You may also email **complaints@rightfirsttimeuk.com**. We will aim to route complaints received elsewhere within RFTUK to the appropriate person rather than reject them because they came through a different channel.

If possible, tell us what happened, relevant dates, the service or people involved, supporting evidence, the effect on you and what outcome you would like. Please share only the personal information needed for the complaint. We will not automatically reject a complaint because something is missing.

We may consider anonymous complaints, especially those involving safeguarding, fraud, serious misconduct or a risk of retaliation, although anonymity can limit investigation or our ability to respond. An authorised representative may complain for someone else; we may need evidence of authority before disclosing private information.

4. Accessible, respectful and safe communication

We aim to offer a fair process for people with disabilities, neurodivergence, different communication needs or difficulty writing formal English. Ask through the [Contact Us page](#) for adjustments such as written communication, plain language, extra time, large print or help from an authorised representative.

A complaint is not rejected because the person is upset, persistent, dyslexic, autistic, has a mental-health condition or challenges RFTUK. Nobody acting for RFTUK may retaliate against someone for making a genuine complaint, giving evidence or assisting another complainant.

5. Our response times

- **Ordinary acknowledgement:** we aim to acknowledge receipt within **5 working days**.
- **Ordinary full response:** we aim to respond within **20 working days** of receiving the complaint. If more time is needed, we will explain the delay and, where possible, give an updated timescale.
- **Internal review:** a request should normally reach us within **14 days** of the decision. We may accept a later request for good reason.
- **Data-protection complaint:** the law requires us to acknowledge it within **30 days**, investigate appropriately without undue delay, and communicate the outcome. Our ordinary 5-working-day aim remains our preferred target.
- **Urgent risk:** safeguarding, serious fraud, suspected personal-data breaches and immediate danger are triaged promptly, not left for ordinary complaint timescales.

6. Immediate danger, safeguarding and serious risks

The complaints service is not an emergency service. **Call 999 if someone is in immediate danger.** Safeguarding concerns must be acted on under the Safeguarding Policy and referred to appropriate services when required; they must not wait for an ordinary complaints decision.

Suspected criminal conduct, theft, serious financial misuse, urgent publication harm or a security incident may require protective measures, preserving evidence or notifying appropriate authorities. A protective restriction is not by itself a finding that an allegation is true.

7. Acknowledgement, triage and investigation

We aim to confirm receipt, explain the likely next steps and identify any further information needed. We assess urgency, conflicts of interest, safeguarding, data protection, evidence preservation and any relevant legal deadline.

A proportionate investigation may consider the complainant's account, records and messages, relevant policies, supporting evidence, publication sources and responses from those complained about. Allegations are not automatically findings of fact. Where fair and safe, a person facing a serious allegation should have a reasonable chance to respond.

Evidence may be restricted where necessary to protect a child, whistleblower, confidential third party, legal privilege, privacy or security.

8. Independence and complaints about RFTUK leadership

A person should not investigate or decide a complaint about their own conduct. Material personal, professional, financial or organisational conflicts should be declared and managed. We will seek an unconflicted Director, suitable Member or independent input where proportionate and available.

Founders, Directors, Campaign Leaders, Campaigners and Volunteers are all accountable under this policy. Founding or senior status does not provide immunity. A complaint about misuse of party-political activity or organisational resources will be examined in context and according to our political-independence arrangements.

9. Decision, reasons and possible remedies

Our response should address the main points, explain the evidence-based reasons as far as we lawfully can, and say whether the complaint is upheld, partly upheld, not upheld or cannot be determined on the available evidence.

Where appropriate we may explain or clarify an issue, correct or remove information, apologise, refund or repay money, improve a process, train or supervise a person, restrict delegated authority, take safeguarding or governance action, or refer a matter to an appropriate body.

An apology or correction should not be withheld just because an error is uncomfortable. We may be unable to share other people's personal information, confidential reports or legally privileged material in the response.

10. Internal review and appeal

If you disagree with the outcome, you may request an internal review, normally within 14 days, through our [Contact Us page](#). Please explain what evidence, process, conflict, reasoning or outcome you believe should be reconsidered.

Where reasonably possible, someone different will conduct the review. They may confirm or change the decision, reopen enquiries, or direct further action. The internal process may then close, subject to any new significant evidence, safeguarding issue or continuing legal duty.

11. Data-protection complaints and personal-data breaches

A complaint about RFTUK's handling of personal information is subject to the legal complaint duties introduced in June 2026. RFTUK must provide a clear complaints route, acknowledge receipt within 30 days, investigate without undue delay, keep the complainant appropriately informed and communicate its outcome. See the [ICO's guidance on handling data-protection complaints](#).

You may raise a privacy complaint through our [Contact Us page](#), by emailing complaints@rightfirsttimeuk.com, or via the [Data Protection Complaint form](#). Appropriate internal handling may be separate from other complaint categories.

If a complaint reveals a suspected personal-data breach, our breach-response process must begin promptly. Where legally required, RFTUK must notify the ICO without undue delay and, where feasible, within 72 hours of becoming aware of a notifiable breach. High-risk breaches may also require notifying affected people without undue delay.

12. Fundraising, membership, PCS and publication issues

Fundraising and donation complaints will be considered with RFTUK's Fundraising and Donation Transparency policies. The [Fundraising Regulator's guidance](#) may apply depending on the fundraising activity and the regulator's remit.

Complaints about membership, subscribers, fees, refunds or cancellation are also considered under applicable service terms and consumer rights. Complaints about the Parent Contribution Service (PCS) may cover access, fees, records, communication, privacy or administration, but this policy does not change or enforce any parent-to-parent financial arrangement.

Complaints about factual errors, misleading website content or public statements may lead to source checks, correction or a review under the Evidence, Research, Publication & Corrections Policy. Legitimate disagreement with a campaign or viewpoint is not itself misconduct.

13. External routes and independent rights

Depending on the circumstances, you may also have the right to complain to the Information Commissioner's Office (data protection), a relevant fundraising regulator, police or safeguarding authority, a court or tribunal, or another body with legal jurisdiction. Which route applies depends on the issue; RFTUK does not promise that every outside body can consider every complaint.

Our internal process does not replace your statutory rights, legal remedies or external deadlines. You do not need RFTUK's permission to seek independent advice or use a lawful external complaint route.

14. Unreasonable conduct and fair treatment

We may set proportionate boundaries for threatening, discriminatory, harassing or intentionally disruptive conduct, for example by using one written contact channel. We will try to separate unacceptable behaviour from the underlying complaint and keep a safe complaint route open.

A complaint not being upheld does not mean it was malicious. Separate action for deliberately forged evidence, fraud or knowingly false harmful allegations must itself be based on evidence and a fair process.

15. Privacy, records and learning

We handle complaints on a need-to-know basis, not with a promise of absolute secrecy. Limited sharing may be necessary with relevant decision-makers, the person complained about, professional advisers, regulators, police or safeguarding services where lawful and appropriate.

We keep proportionate complaint records, evidence, correspondence, decisions, actions and reviews according to our data-protection and retention arrangements. Records are not kept indefinitely without a defined reason.

We periodically review complaint themes and delays to improve accessibility, policies, training, publications, safeguarding and systems. Public reports should use anonymised or aggregated information unless a lawful justification requires otherwise.

16. Related policies, review and contacts

Read this alongside our Safeguarding, Data Protection & GDPR, Privacy, Accessibility, Financial Controls, Fundraising, Volunteer, Conflict of Interest, Evidence & Corrections, Community Standards and Website Terms policies, as relevant to the complaint.

This policy is reviewed at least annually and sooner after material legal, operational or safeguarding changes.

Previous revision: 30 September 2026. **Current version:** 1.2, updated 12 October 2026.

To make a complaint or request a review, use the [Contact Us page](#), the [complaints form](#) or email complaints@rightfirsttimeuk.com.

Company & legal details

Right First Time UK Ltd is a non-profit company limited by guarantee, registered in England and Wales. **Company number: 17493370.** RFTUK is not a registered charity or Community Interest Company. Its Parent Contribution Service is an RFTUK service, not a separate statutory maintenance agency. RFTUK complaint procedures cover RFTUK conduct and services; they do not substitute for another organisation's appeal.

Contact: <https://rightfirsttimeuk.com/contact-us.php>