







## COMPLAINTS POLICY & PROCEDURE – FUNDRAISING

	Directorate Responsibility	Finance Directorate
	Summary of this policy	The procedure sets out the actions to be taken when Autism Together receives a complaint regarding fundraising.
	Other policies which should be read in conjunction with this policy	
	Date of last review of Policy	March 2020
	Were changes made to the policy? Briefly describe.	N/A
	Relevant legislation	Fundraising Regulator Charities Act 2016

### Links to Key Lines of Enquiry (KLOE)

Key Question	Key Lines of Enquiry (KLOE)
Safe	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>S1 How do systems, processes and practices safeguard people from abuse?</li> <li>S2 How are risks to people assessed and their safety monitored and managed so they are supported to stay safe and their freedom is respected?</li> <li>S6 Are lessons learnt and improvements made when things go wrong?</li> </ul>
Effective	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>E4 How well do staff, teams and services within and across organisations work together to deliver effective care, support and treatment?</li> <li>E7 Is consent to care and treatment always sought in line with legislation and guidance?</li> </ul>
Caring	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>C2 How does the service support people to express their views and be actively involved in making decisions about their care, support and treatment as far as possible?</li> <li>C3 How are people's privacy, dignity and independence respected and promoted?</li> </ul>

Responsive	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>R2 How are people’s concerns and complaints listened and responded to and used to improve the quality of care?</li> </ul>
Well Led	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>W1 Is there a clear vision and credible strategy to deliver high-quality care and support, and promote a positive culture that is open, inclusive and empowering, which achieves good outcomes for people?</li> <li>W2 Does the governance framework ensure that responsibilities are clear and that quality performance, risks and regulatory requirements are understood and managed?</li> <li>W3 How well are people who use the service, the public and staff engaged and involved?</li> <li>W4 How does the service continually learn, improve, innovate and ensure sustainability?</li> <li>W5 How does the service work in partnership with other agencies?</li> </ul>

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### 1. Purpose

The purpose of this procedure is to provide an efficient and robust fundraising complaints process for supporters, in line with Autism Together’s values, and the standards set by the Fundraising Regulator.

### 2. Scope

The procedure applies to anyone accessing the Autism Together Fundraising Team.

### 3. The Policy

Autism Together is committed to excellent customer service. We regard complaints as an opportunity to turn a negative experience into a positive one, as well as an opportunity to learn and to improve.

The purpose of the complaint’s procedure is to ensure that we:

- listen and are responsive to people who raise an issue with Autism Together,
- respond swiftly,
- are fair and consistent,
- offer solutions and/or explanations,
- offer complainants recourse to someone more senior/more independent if they wish,
- ensure that staff who are mentioned in complaints receive support,

- respect confidentiality,
- record complaints consistently and monitor what we record,
- use complaints positively, as an opportunity for learning and improvement,
- protect those raising a concern from victimisation and harassment.

#### 4. The Procedure

Complaints can be made in any of the following ways:

Phone: 0151 482 3136

Email: [lisa.masters@autismtogether.co.uk](mailto:lisa.masters@autismtogether.co.uk)

Post: Lisa Masters MInstF(Dip), Fundraising Manager, Autism Together, Oak House, 6 Tebay Road, Bromborough, CH62 3PA

All complaints, and their progress, must be recorded in the Complaints File. A note must also be made under the complainants' account on the fundraising database, to identify that any contact / correspondence should be made only by the Fundraising Manager.

On receipt of a complaint, the Fundraising Manager will send out a letter of acknowledgement, setting out the complaints procedure and timescales.

Complaints will be reviewed and the Fundraising Manager will aim to respond within seven working days of receipt, however it can take up to 10 working days. If the matter requires further investigation, the Fundraising Manager will provide an update within 10 working days of receipt.

Having reviewed the complaint, the Fundraising Manager will provide clear, evidence-based reasons for the decision and ensure those decisions are proportionate, appropriate and fair. This means responding openly to all of the substantive points raised by a complainant and explaining why the Fundraising Manager considers those points are justified or not.

When responding to complaints, the Fundraising Manager will be respectful and acknowledge the experience of the complainant, whether the complaint is justified or not.

Autism Together should take responsibility for the actions of its staff and those acting on behalf of the organisation. When responding to a complaint, the Fundraising Manager will acknowledge if things have gone wrong and take proportionate action to put things right, including apologising where appropriate. This will include telling the complainant about the lessons learnt and any changes made to services, guidance or policy as a result of the complaint.

If the complainant is unsatisfied with the outcome, the complaint will be escalated to the Director of Finance, where a review of the complaint will be carried out. Autism Together aim to complete investigations within 25 days of their start date.

If the complainant remains dissatisfied with the outcome, they are entitled to raise the matter with the Fundraising Regulator. The Fundraising Regulator is the regulatory body for UK fundraising, overseeing charities and agencies' compliance with the Code of

Fundraising Practice. They can adjudicate on complaints relating to fundraising activities, where the complainant and charity cannot reach a resolution.

Complaints are required to be assessed by the charity before raising with the Fundraising Regulator.

Fundraising Regulator 2nd Floor, CAN Mezzanine 49-51 East Road London, N1 6AH  
Tel: 0300 999 3407 / [www.fundraisingregulator.org.uk](http://www.fundraisingregulator.org.uk)

## **5. Responsibilities**

### **5.1 Compliance, monitoring and review**

Complaints should be regarded as a source of learning and improvement.

Autism Together will keep a record of the complaints they receive, the outcomes of their investigations and the reasons for their decisions.

The Fundraising Manager will regularly review the complaints received to identify any trends or wider learning. In reviewing the complaints received, the Fundraising Manager will consider what lessons can be learnt and how services and the experience of donors can be improved.

### **5.2 Reporting**

The Fundraising Manager will regularly report to the Director of Finance on the number and nature of complaints received and the outcome of those complaints, including whether they have led to a change in services, policies or procedures.

The Director of Finance will feed this information back to the Senior Leadership Team and the Board of Trustees.

### **5.3 Records Management**

Autism Together must ensure it complies with the requirements outlined in the Charities (Protection and Social Investments) Act 2016, which requires that registered charities, by law, must have their accounts audited to include extra information about fundraising complaints in their annual report and accounts.