



**Saraswat  
Bank**

**POLICY ON CUSTOMER  
GRIEVANCE REDRESSAL  
2017-2020**



**CUSTOMER GRIEVANCE REDRESSAL POLICY**  
**2017-2020**

**I. PREAMBLE:**

- “Prompt and efficient customer service has become the key to the success of any organisation”. This is applicable specifically to banks, as banks are service organizations. Today’s customer is more demanding and at the same time knowledgeable and very well aware of his rights. It is thus of vital importance that the employees of the Bank keep themselves upgraded about the new initiatives taken within the Bank as well as in the banking industry and extend all the services in a prompt, courteous and helpful manner.
- A well attended query or enquiry results in satisfaction of the customer, which moulds the psyche of the customer to become a loyal customer of any organisation. However an unattended query or enquiry results in customer dissatisfaction leading to customer grievance. Customer grievances, if not attended promptly, can be escalated in the form of complaints to higher levels like the consumer court / the Ombudsman/BCSBI, thereby affecting the reputation of the Bank.
- Every employee is expected to understand the importance of attending to customer grievance as a part of customer service, look at every query or enquiry as a business opportunity and try to convert it into business, and simultaneously gain customer loyalty.

**II. BACKGROUND:**

- The Bank realizes that quick and effective handling of complaints as well as prompt corrective & preventive actions to improve processes are essential to provide excellent customer service to all segments of customers.
- To achieve this, the Bank has a clearly documented Policy for Redressal of Customer Grievances.
- Through this Policy, the Bank will ensure that a suitable mechanism exists for receiving and addressing complaints from its customers / constituents with specific emphasis on resolving such complaints fairly and expeditiously regardless of sources of the complaints.

### **III. OBJECTIVES OF THE POLICY:**

The Bank's Policy on Grievance Redressal is prepared to fulfill the following objectives

- To ensure that the customers are treated fairly at all times
- To ensure that complaints raised by customers are dealt with courteously and on time.
- To ensure that customers are fully informed of the avenues available to them to escalate their complaints/ grievances within the organization and their rights to alternative remedies, if they are not fully satisfied with the response of the Bank to their complaints.
- To ensure that the Bank treats all complaints efficiently and fairly, as inefficient handling can damage the Bank's reputation and business.
- To ensure that the Bank employees work in good faith and without prejudice to the interests of the customer.

### **IV. SCOPE OF THE POLICY:**

- The Policy will cover resolution of all complaints raised by customers on account of system intricacies, procedures, gaps in customer service, service charges etc. Redressal machinery is also applicable to complaints raised on account of credit information of customers.
- The grievance redressal mechanism given in the Policy will be available for issues concerning the Bank's employees and the Bank will ensure that the customer issues are resolved expeditiously and effectively.

### **V. VALIDITY:**

This Policy will be valid for the period 2017-2020 and will be reviewed subsequently by SBU - Retail. Modifications, if any, warranted by changes in RBI/BCSBI directives will be incorporated after approval of the Board.

## **VI. KEY ELEMENTS OF THE POLICY:**

### **The Policy Document covers the following aspects:**

- i) Internal machinery to handle customer complaints /grievances
- ii) Mandatory display requirements
- iii) Time frames
- iv) Interactions with customers
- v) Training to operating staff on handling complaints
- vi) Registration and resolution of complaints
- vii) Common Guidelines for Complaint Resolution

### **i. Internal Machinery to handle Customer Complaints/ Grievances:**

The internal machinery developed by the Bank to handle customer complaints/ grievances will be as stated below:

#### **Branch Level:**

- As customers normally deal with the branches, it is likely that the complaints are lodged at the branch office. The Branch Manager will thus be responsible for attending to complaints/grievances in respect of customer service at the branch level. He will be responsible for ensuring the satisfactory closure of all complaints received at the branches. A register of all complaints received will be maintained.
- In case the Branch Manager is not in a position to resolve the complaint completely or the customer is not satisfied with the resolution provided by the Branch Manager, then the customer will be provided with alternate channels to report the matter. Thus the Branch Manager will make provisions for:
  - Appropriate arrangements for receiving complaints and suggestions.
  - Making available the name, address and contact number of the Nodal Officer.
  - Making available the contact details of the Banking Ombudsman of the area
- The Branch Manager will try to resolve the complaints within specified time frames. As per the Policy, the complaints received at the Branch level should be resolved within 7 days.

- Communication of the Bank's stand on any issue to the customer is a vital requirement, as therefore if complaints received require some time for examination of issues involved this will be invariably conveyed to the customer.
- If the Branch Manager feels that it is not possible at his/her level to solve the problem he/she will refer the case to the Zonal Incharge for guidance and necessary action under advice to the customer.

#### **Zonal Office level:**

- The Zonal Office will try to resolve the case of complaints received at the Zonal Office either from the branch or directly from the customer within the prescribed time frame (stated later in this Policy).
- If the Zonal Incharge is unable to satisfy the customer, such complaints will be referred to the Nodal Officer. The Zonal Office will refer the case to the Nodal Officer within 20 days from the date of receipt of the complaint at the branch or within 10 days, if the complaint is lodged directly at the Zonal Office.

#### **Nodal Officer Level:**

- The Nodal Officer will consider unresolved complaints/grievances referred to it by branches/Zones. All complaints received at the Corporate Office will be forwarded to the Nodal Officer.
- The Nodal Officer, after discussing the issue with the functional heads, will try to resolve the complaint to the satisfaction of the customer. At times the Nodal Officer may interact with the customer and try to resolve the issue.
- In case the customer is still not satisfied then the Nodal Officer will place the issue before the CENMAC members for their guidance.

## **Role of the Nodal Officer (NO) to handle complaints and grievances**

- The Nodal Officer will evaluate the feedback on quality of customer service received from various zones. The NO will also review comments/feed-back on customer service and implementation of commitments to Customers.
- The Nodal Officer will be responsible to ensure that all regulatory instructions regarding customer service are followed by the Bank. Towards this, the Nodal Officer will obtain necessary feedback from Zonal/Branch Managers/ Functional Heads.
- The Nodal Officer will also consider unresolved complaints/grievances referred to it by the Functional Heads responsible for redressal and offer his advice.
- The Nodal Officer will submit a report on his/her performance to the Board/CENMAC at half yearly interval. All complaints remaining unresolved for more than 30 days from the date of receipt of complaints from the customer will be reported to CENMAC by the Nodal Officer.

### **Customer Relations and Experience (CRE):**

This department is in receipt of complaints through the following channel:

- Bank's Website
- Official mail id for complaints –  
' [customerservicecentre@saraswatbank.com](mailto:customerservicecentre@saraswatbank.com) '
- Facebook + Tweeter
- Corporate Mail ID
- Outsourced Customer Service Centre.

Out of the above channels, CRE department is exclusively responsible to manage complaints received on Bank's Website, Official mail id for complaints–[customerservicecentre@saraswatbank.com](mailto:customerservicecentre@saraswatbank.com) and Outsourced Customer Service Centre.

The complaints received through these channels are resolved by the team at CRE with inputs/intervention from concerned branches and departments wherever needed.

## **ii. Mandatory Display requirements**

“May I help you” internal signage will be displayed at the counter nearest to the entrance of the branch. This counter will be invariably manned by an experienced official who will be well versed with the Bank’s various procedures, schemes, circulars, etc and will be able to guide the customer properly

The Banking Codes and Standard Board of India also insist on display of this information as per RBI’s specifications. Accordingly, a Comprehensive Notice Board in the specified standardized format will be provided and will be displayed at all our branches. The information contained in Comprehensive Notice Board is given as under:

- (a) The appropriate arrangement for receiving complaints and suggestions-Complaint register and suggestion box are provided at branches.
- (b) The name, address and contact number of the Nodal Officer are displayed at branch.
- (c) Name, address and contact number of Chief Vigilance Officer
- (d) Name and Contact details of the Banking Ombudsman of the area are displayed at the branch.

## **iii. Time frames:**

- Complaints are seen in the right perspective by the Bank as they indirectly reveal a weak spot in the working of the Bank. Complaints received will be analyzed from all possible angles.
- A specific time schedule will be set up for handling complaints and disposing them at all levels including branches, Zonal and Corporate office. Branch Managers will try to resolve the complaint within the specified time frames.
  - (a) The complaints received at the Branch level will be resolved within 7 days.
  - (b) The Zonal Office will try to resolve the case in 10 days from the receipt of the complaint at the Zonal office either from the Branch or directly from the customer.

- (c) If the Zonal Incharge is unable to satisfy the customer, he will refer such complaints to the Nodal Officer. The Zonal Office will ensure to refer the case to the Nodal Officer within 20 days from the date of receipt of the complaint at the Branch Office and within 10 days if the complaint is lodged directly at the Zonal Office.
  - (d) The Nodal Officer will consider unresolved complaints/grievances referred to it by Branches/Zones. The Nodal Officer, after discussing the issue with the functional heads will try to resolve the complaint to the satisfaction of the customer. At times the Nodal Officer will interact with the customer and try to resolve the issue. In case the customer is still not satisfied, then the Nodal Officer will place the issue before the CENMAC members for their guidance.
  - (e) All complaints remaining unresolved for more than 30 days from the date of receipt of the complaint from the customer will be reported to CENMAC by the Nodal Officer.
  - (f) As per the Banking Ombudsman Scheme, if the customer's complaint is not attended to properly by any Bank / branch or the complaint is not accepted by the Bank / branch or the complaint is not resolved within 30 days the customer can approach the Banking Ombudsman with his complaint or explore other legal avenues available for grievance redressal.
- In case of reviewing a request from a person concerning the amendment of any record or information pertaining to him, the Bank will take a decision in the matter and notify the Credit Information Company of such amendment within 30 days of the receipt of the request.

**iv. Interaction with customers:**

- The Bank recognizes that customers' expectations/ requirements/grievances can be better appreciated through personal interaction with customers by the Bank's staff.

- Structured customer meets, will be held once in a quarter by the Zonal Incharge/SME Incharge at the Zonal Office/SME so as to pass on the message to the customers that the Bank cares for them and values their feedback/suggestions for improvement in customer service. The customers will be educated about the various facilities/rights given to customers through the codes of BCSBI. The Zonal Manager will maintain rapport with the customers through branch visits and meeting the customers at branches. The meeting shall also be attended by the Principle Code Compliance officer of the Bank, subject to availability. A separate register shall be maintained for noting the minutes of the meeting.
- Branch Level Customer Service Committee should be formed at every branch to discuss the customer service aspects. The Committee at every branch should consists of Branch Manager, one management staff and one non-management staff. The Committee should conduct the meeting and branch should display in branches the date of meeting, which may be attended by customer if desired. A separate register shall be maintained for noting the minutes of the meeting.
- Many of the complaints arise on account of lack of awareness among customers about the Bank's services and such interactions will help the customers appreciate banking services better. The feed back from customers will be valuable inputs for the Bank for revising its products and services to meet customer requirements.

**v. Training to operating staff on handling complaints:**

The Bank will provide comprehensive training to its employees. In such training programmes specifically meant for handling customer complaints and grievances the guidelines given by BCSBI, RBI on grievance redressal will be enunciated. The guiding principles of our approach to grievance redressal will also be explained.

Online tests will also be conducted by Staff Learning Centre to keep the staff updated on the various products and services. Amendments and

circular instructions will be issued which will help the staff to attend to customer queries promptly

The entire grievance redressal mechanism will be built around the following principles:

- (a) Transparency: The customer will be provided with information regarding the channels they can access to service their requirements and resolve their issues. In addition, the turn-around time for issues to be redressed including investigation and resolution will be communicated transparently.
- (b) Accessibility: The Bank will enable the customers to avail of services through multiple published channels.
- (c) Escalation: Information on the process of escalation of complaints to the next level in case the customer is not satisfied with the resolution provided by the current level in the Bank will be made available in the branches/Bank's Website.
- (d) Customer Education: The Bank shall endeavor to make continuous efforts to educate its customers to enable them to make informed choices regarding banking products and reduce errors in banking transactions.
- (e) Review: The Bank will have forums at various levels to review customer grievances and enhance the quality of customer service. The quality of Customer Service rendered by the Bank is examined periodically and a note placed before the Board every six months
- (f) The Policy document will be made available at all branches. The concerned employees will be made aware about the complaint handling process.

#### **vi. Registration and resolution of Complaints:**

The Bank will have forum at various levels for the registration of customer grievances and for enhancing the quality of customer service. On the basis of this approach the following avenues will be open for the customers:

**(a) Customer Service Centre/IT Helpdesk:**

Customers can contact Customer Service Centre/Helpdesk officials over the Toll-Free Number for redressal of issues or send an email letter to the mail ids/addresses displayed in the posters at the branches/website. On making a complaint vide a telephone, Customer Service Centre/Helpdesk will generate a complaint/grievance reference number.

**(b) Branch :**

The customer can speak to the branch officials/Branch Manager for resolution of their issues or make a written complaint. Alternatively the customers can drop their complaint /feedback in the boxes made available at the branch.

**(c) Zonal Office**

In case a customer feels that satisfactory resolution of a problem is not possible the branch level, he may write straight to the Zonal Office. The Zonal Office address will be displayed in the branches as well as on the Website.

**(d) Nodal Officer**

In case the customer is not happy or feels that his/her grievance is not going to be suitably redressed at the Branch /Zonal Office, he can write directly to the Nodal Officer. The Nodal Officer's name and address will be displayed at the branches/Zones.

**(e) Bank's Website:**

Customers can log in a complaint by writing to the "Feedback" section in the Home Page of the Bank's Website. The complaint form will be uploaded in this section. Customers can also write to the business heads of the respective products, as updated on the Bank's Website, in case they are not satisfied with the resolution provided through various channels.

**(f) Chairman's Office /Managing Director's Office:**

The customers may also write directly to the CEO's Office. The reply to the customer in such cases will be sent after discussion/replies from the concerned branches /Departments /CEOs.

**(g) Email ID:**

Customers can mail their complaints on the Bank's customer service id – customerservicecentre@saraswatbank.com. This id will be checked on all working days. The reply to the customer in such cases will be sent after discussion from the concerned branches/Zonal office/Departments.

**(h) Facebook/Tweeter:**

Bank also has a social media page of both Facebook as well as Tweeter. Customers can give their comments/feedback /suggestions or raise complaints on this page. This page will be managed by the AACC department and based on the nature of the query, AACC will forward it to respective branches/department for resolution. The reply from the concerned branches/departments will be uploaded on the social media page.

**vii. Some Common Guidelines for Complaint Resolution:**

- (i) The customer will be given an acknowledgment of the complaint made, by the designated officials of the level at which the complaint is made.
- (ii) The complaint will be resolved by coordinating with the officials concerned of the relevant branches /departments.
- (iii) Each level will scrupulously adhere to the time frame specified for complaint resolution. In case it is not possible the complaint will be immediately escalated to the next level.

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