



सेंट्रल बैंक ऑफ इंडिया
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Central Bank of India

1911 से आपके लिए 'केंद्रित'

"CENTRAL" TO YOU SINCE 1911

CUSTOMER SERVICE--OPERATIONS DEPARTMENT

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CIRCULAR TO ALL OFFICES

POLICY ON CUSTOMER GRIEVANCES REDRESSAL MECHANISM---2019-2020

The underlying principle of the captioned policy is to ensure that a suitable mechanism exists at all levels i.e. Branch /Regional/ Zonal and Central Office for receiving and redressing complaints from its customers / constituents with emphasis on resolving such complaints in a fair and transparent manner expeditiously regardless of the source of the complaints.

Grievances received from customers are examined on an on-going basis so as to know how the Grievances Redressal Machinery is functioning and whether the same has been effective in achieving improvement in customer service on different parameters.

No amendment/modification has been incorporated in the existing Policy on Customer Grievances Redressal Mechanism and the same have been approved by the Board of the Bank in its meeting held on 18.04.2019. The policy is attached herewith.

Please bring the contents of the policy to the knowledge of each and every staff and ensure strict implementation of the policy guidelines in letter and spirit.

This policy is available on Bank's web-site under public domain.

Branches / Offices will ensure to keep this updated policy in Display Folder.

All Zonal Heads / Regional Heads & Branch Offices are requested to scrupulously follow the guidelines in letter and spirit.

(VIVEK KUMAR)
DY GENERAL MANAGER- OPR

Policy on Grievance Redressal Mechanism- 2019-2020

PREAMBLE:

- In the present scenario of competitive banking, excellence in customer service is the most important tool for sustained business growth. Customer complaints are part of the business life of any corporate entity. This is more so for banks because banks are service organizations.
- As a service oriented organization, customer service and customer satisfaction both are our prime concern. The bank believes that providing prompt and efficient service is essential not only to attract new customers, but also to retain existing clientele base.
- This policy document aims at minimizing recurrence of customer complaints and grievances by prompt redressal, proper service delivery and review mechanism. The review mechanism should help in identifying shortcomings in product features and service delivery. Customer dissatisfaction spoils bank's name and image in the public.
- In order to make bank's redressal mechanism more meaningful and effective, a structured system has been built up. Such system would ensure that the redressal sought is just, fair and is within the given frame-work of rules and regulations. The policy document would be made available at all branches. All employees will be made aware of the complaint handling and redressal process.

BASIC PRINCIPLES

The bank's policy on grievance redressal is based on the following cardinal Principles:-

- Customers be treated fairly at all times
- Complaints raised by customers are dealt with courtesy and on time
- Customers are fully informed of avenues to escalate their complaints/grievances within the organization and their rights to alternative remedy, if they are not fully satisfied with the response of the bank to their complaints.
- Bank will treat all complaints efficiently and fairly as they can damage the bank's reputation and business if handled otherwise.
- The bank employees must work in good faith and without prejudice to the interests of the customers.

REASONS FOR CUSTOMER COMPLAINTS AND RIGHT OF CUSTOMERS

- The customer complaint arises due to
 - The staff attitude in dealing with customers,
 - Functional deficiencies, inadequate provisions / arrangements available to the Customers in branches or gaps in standard of services expected and actual Services rendered.

- The customer reserves full right to register his / her grievance if not satisfied with the services provided by the bank. He / She can submit his/ her complaint by any mode of his/ her convenience such as in person, in writing, over telephone, through e-mail or through 24x 7 online Call Centre. If a customer's complaint is not resolved within stipulated time frame or otherwise if he / she is not satisfied with the resolution/ solution provided by the bank, he/she can approach Banking Ombudsman or can avail other legal avenues for grievance redressal.

OBJECTIVES OF THE POLICY

- Bank shall 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 source of the complaints.

GRIEVANCE REDRESSAL MECHANISM

1.1 MODE OF LODGING COMPLAINTS BY THE CUSTOMERS

- Our Bank's four-tier administrative set up provides the option to customers for lodging and redressal of their complaints
 - i) Branch Office
 - ii) Regional Office
 - iii) Zonal office
 - iv) Central Office
- All complaints received at every level will be immediately acknowledged by concerned Incharge and dealt with properly.
- Our Bank is providing an online grievance redressal mechanism whereby online registration of grievances can be made through our website, www.centralbankofindia.co.in.
- The grievances will be attended at different levels as the time schedule specified in this policy with an inbuilt escalation process by which the grievances get escalated to next higher level in case of non redressal of grievance.
- As a measure of customer centric initiative, our Bank has introduced Customer Interaction Call Centre It works 24X7 for satisfaction of customer needs with a dedicated toll free number **1800 22 1911**.

- The Call Centre is providing the following services to the customers:-
 - Grievances services and resolution thereof.
 - Information service with regard to Bank's deposit and loan products and other Ancillary services
 - We have introduced the following additional facilities for betterment of Customer Services through Call Center:-
 - a) Phone Banking – Developed IVR integration on 10 services functionalities at Call Center with multi Indian language facilities. Mobile Banking . Internet Banking, facilities in multiple languages are available for customers.
 - b) Introducing the Complaint Management and Grievances Redressal at Call Center additionally to facilitate real time complaint redressal .
 - c) Introducing C- Sat Module – in order to record the Feedback from Customer on quality of grievance redressal.

1.2 Receiving Complaints

- Every Branch / Regional Office /Zonal Office shall attend their respective on-line complaints from Bank Portal, CPGRAM, INGRAM , PMJDY & Helpdesk.
- All the complaints received manually by post or through E- mail are required to be punched in our Bank portal and to be acknowledged to the complainant immediately.
- Ensure that the complaint registers are kept at prominent place in their Offices which would make it possible for the customers to enter their complaints.
- Provide complaint / suggestion box at each office of the bank.
- Place a notice requesting the customers to meet the Branch Manager invariably for any grievances. If the grievances remain un-redressed, he / she may contact Regional Manager / Zonal Manager.
- Inform the complainant that on-line complaint form, along with the name of the nodal officers for complaint redressal, is available on the bank's website to facilitate complaint submission by customers. The complaint form shall also indicate that the first point for redressal of complaints is the bank itself and that complainants may approach the Internal Banking Ombudsman /Banking Ombudsman only if the complaint is not resolved at the bank level within a month.
- Details of Internal Ombudsman must be available in our website.
- Ensure acknowledgment of the complaints received through any mode.
- Ensure time frame for resolving the complaints received at various level as given in this policy.

- Ensure that redressal of complaints emanating from rural areas and those relating to financial assistance to Priority Sector and Government's Poverty Alleviation Programmes also form part of the above process.

1.3 Complaint Book / Register

- Complaint book with perforated copies in each set shall be available in every Branch so as to instantly provide an acknowledgement to the customers submitting the paper complaints or emails and intimation to given to the controlling office.
- Bank shall use a complaint book with uniform format, which shall have the adequate number of perforated copies, which are so designated that the complainant could be given an acknowledged copy instantly while receiving the paper complaints manually. A copy of the complaint shall be forwarded to the concerned controlling offices of the bank along with the remark of the Branch Manager within a time frame.
- Branches of the Bank shall maintain a separate complaints register in the prescribed format given for entering all the complaints /grievances received by them directly or through our Central Office /Government/ RBI/ BCSBI etc. These registers shall be maintained irrespective of the fact whether a complaint was received or not in the past. The complaints register maintained by branches shall be scrutinized by the concerned Regional Manager during his periodical visit to the branches and his observations/ comments recorded in the relative visit reports. For the convenience our bank shall adopt the aforesaid format and generate copies electronically.

1.4 Online Grievance Redressal System

- Online registration of grievance is available on our website www.centralbankofindia.co.in . The online grievance system provides Unique Identification Number to access to the customer also for recording the complaint status, tracking and receiving response from the Bank. The Complaints in online system are segregated by types and categories and sub categories or sub types with time bound auto escalated system to higher authorities. In Online Grievance Redressal System there is real time Complaint tracking system by the complainant.

1.5 Display Requirements

Bank shall display of customer service related information for making complaints, as under,

- Bank shall display prominently at its branches, the names of the officials who can be contacted for redressal of complaints together with their direct telephone number, complete address (not Post Box No.) and e-mail address etc., for proper and timely contact by the customers and for enhancing the effectiveness of the redressal machinery.
- Bank shall display at its branches, the names of the officials who can be contacted for redressal of complaints. The same shall also include the name and other details of the concerned Nodal Officer appointed under the Banking Ombudsman Scheme, 2006.

- Bank shall display on its web-site, the names and other details of the officials at its Central Office/Zonal Offices/ Regional Offices, who can be contacted for redressal of complaints including the names of the Nodal Officers /Principal Nodal Officers.
- Bank shall display on its web-site, the names and other details of its MD & CEO / EDs and Functional Heads for various operations to enable its customers to approach them in case of need, if necessary.

2. Internal Machinery to handle Customer complaints/ grievances.

2.1 Branch Level Customer Committee

- Every branch will establish branch level Customer Committee with greater involvement of customers. The committee will be headed by the Branch Manager and there are 6-7 members including Branch Manager as Chairman of the Committee. Other than Branch Manager, there will be one officer, one clerk. One sub-staff and 3 non-official members preferably the customers of the branch out of which at least one should be Senior Citizen. The tenure of the committee will be one year. It will be reconstituted every year
- The Branch Level Customer Committee shall meet on 15th of every month and in case 15th is holiday then the meeting will be held on the previous day i.e 14th of the month, to study complaint/ suggestions, cases of delay, difficulties faced/ reported by customers/ members of the committee and it shall evolve ways and means of improving customer service.
- The Branch Level Customer Committee shall also submit monthly reports giving inputs/ suggestion to the Regional Office which will submit consolidated report to Zonal Office and Zonal Office in turn submit the consolidated report along with its comments to Operations Department, Central Office so as to enable them to put before the Standing Committee to examine the reports and provide relevant feedback to the Customer Service Committee of the Board for necessary policy/ procedural action.

2.2 Customer Service Committee of the Board:

- The sub-committee of the Board would formulate various deposit & loan policies such as the treatment of death of a depositor for operations of his account, the product approval process and the annual survey of customer satisfaction and triennial audit of such services. The Committee would also examine any other issues having a bearing on the quality of customer service rendered and service issues for the individuals as a borrower as well. The Committee would also review the functioning of Standing Committee on Customer Service.

2.3 Standing Committee on Customer Service:

- The Standing Committee on Customer Service will be chaired by the Managing Director & CEO/ Executive Directors of the bank. Besides two to three Senior Executives of the

Bank, the Committee would also have a few non-executives drawn from the public as members. The committee would have the following functions.

- Evaluate feed-back on quality of customer service received from various quarters.
- The committee would also review comments/feed-back on customer service and implementation of commitments in the Code of Bank's Commitment to Customers received from BCSBI.
- It would also review the feed-back report on complaints related to non-compliance with the Code and its redressal.

2.4 Nodal Officer and other designated officials to handle complaints and grievances:

- Bank has designated GM (Operations) posted at its Central Office as Nodal Officer who is responsible for the implementation of customer service and complaints handling for the entire bank. The Bank has also appointed Asst. Regional Managers/ Chief Manager at its Regional Offices as Customer Relation Officer to handle complaint and grievances in respect of branches falling under their control.

2.5. Internal Banking Ombudsman (IBO)

- To ensure that minimum number of cases is escalated to Banking Ombudsman, the Bank has appointed Internal banking Ombudsman (BO) in terms of RBI revised Internal Ombudsman Scheme 2018 as pro-active measure to strengthen the internal grievance redressal mechanism.
- A customer aggrieved with a banking service as hitherto can complain to bank. Bank will internally escalate all cases to the Internal Banking Ombudsman for final decision where either the complaint is rejected or only partial relief is provided to the complainants as the IO shall not handle complaints received directly from the customers or members of public and will deal with complaints which are already examined by Bank's Internal Grievances Redressal Mechanism.
- Bank/ Internal Banking Ombudsman will examine the complaints on deficiencies of service on the part of the Bank including those listed under clause 8 of the Banking Ombudsman Scheme 2006 (as amended from time to time).
- The Internal Ombudsman shall analyze the pattern of the complaints such as product/ category wise, consumer group wise based on geographical locations e.t.c and suggest means for taking actions to address the root cause of the complaints of different nature.
- The Internal Ombudsman shall examine the complaints on the basis of records/ documents available with Bank and comments/ clarifications furnished by the Bank to specific queries of Internal Ombudsman.

- Upon failing to get a reply from the Bank/ Internal Banking Ombudsman, the complainant can appeal to the Banking Ombudsman of the respective Jurisdiction.

3. The Banking Ombudsman Scheme

- The Scheme of Banking Ombudsman (BO) was introduced with the object of enabling resolution of complaints relating to provision of banking services and resolving disputes between a bank and its constituent through the process of conciliation, mediation and arbitration in respect of deficiencies in customer service. After detailed examination of the complaints/ grievances of customers of banks and after perusal of the comments of banks, the Banking Ombudsman issues their awards in respect of individual complaints to redress the grievances.
- Bank shall ensure that the Awards of the Banking Ombudsman are implemented expeditiously and with active involvement of its Top Management.
- A customer aggrieved with the decision of BO can go the formal fora like Consumer Courts, Civil Court etc. The Bank aggrieved with a BO decision shall seek the advice of the Customer Service Department of Reserve Bank of India before approaching the courts.
- Moreover, before challenging any such Award or decision in higher court, our bank shall examine the cost implications of such a decision from the bank's perspective. Further, any decision or Award given by BO or any Grievance Redressal Forum shall be internally examined by the bank for initiating possible Class Action at the branch/ concerned offices

4 Mandatory display requirements:

It is mandatory for the branches to provide;

- Appropriate arrangement for receiving complaints and suggestions.
- The name, address and contact number of Nodal Officer for Grievance redressal
- Contact details of Banking Ombudsman of the area
- Code of bank's commitments to customers/ Fair Practice code.
- Complaint /suggestion box at each branch of the bank
- Complaint book and register to customer to register their complaint
- The facility of online complaints on Bank's website
- Toll free number of Call Centre

5. Resolution of Grievances:

- Complaints are segregated by types and sub-types, with differentiated time limits for resolution.
- Branch Manager is responsible for the resolution of complaints/ grievances received in respect of customer service by the branch. He would be responsible for ensuring closure of all complaints received and It is his foremost duty to see that the complaint should be resolved completely to the customer's satisfaction and if the customer is not satisfied, then he should be provided with alternate avenues to escalate the issue.
- If the Branch Manager feels that it is not possible at his level to resolve the problem, he will refer the case to Regional Office for guidance.
- Similarly, if Regional Office finds that they are not able to resolve the problem, they will refer the case to Zonal Office.
- If Zonal Office finds that they are not able to resolve the problem, such cases would be referred to the Nodal Officer at Central Office.
- Such references to higher authorities would be made within the time frame given below, which will be reckoned from the date of lodgment/receipt of the complaint at the branch level.
- Complaints lodged directly with administrative offices/Reserve Bank of India/Government Departments would be promptly sent to the concerned branch/office of the Bank for its proper resolution.
- For strengthening the customer confidence in the internal redressal mechanism, there shall be proper monitoring of internal redressal mechanism so that a minimum number of complaints are escalated to Banking Ombudsman

5.1 Time Frame:

- Complaint has to be seen in the right perspective because they indirectly reveal a weak spot in the working of the bank. Complaint received should be analysed from all possible angles. The following time schedule has been set up for handling complaints and disposing them at all levels-

Branch Level	Five Working Days
Regional Office Level	Ten Working Days
Zonal Office Level	Fifteen Working Days
Central Office Level	Twenty One Working Days

- Branch manager should try to resolve the complaint within time around time (TAT). Average time for disposal of the complaints is regularly and closely monitored by Customer Service Committees at different level along with analysis for ATR on complaints.

Communication of bank's stand on any issue to the customer is a vital requirement. Complaints received which would require some time for examination of issues involved should invariably be acknowledged immediately through system. Branch, Regional Office and Zonal Office will send action taken report on complaints received to the Central Office at the end of every month and complainant can track and have the copy of ATR in his mail/ Mobile auto generated through on –line Grievance portal. In case the complainant is not satisfied with ATR of Bank there is option of reopen of the complaint by complainant.

6. Interaction with customers:

- The bank recognizes that customer's expectation/requirement/grievances can be better appreciated through personal interaction with customers by bank's staff.
- Structured customer meets, say once in a month will give a message to the customers that the bank cares for them and values their feedback/suggestions for improvement in customer service.
- Many of the complaints arise on account of lack of awareness among customers about bank services and such interactions will help the customers appreciate banking services better. As for the bank the feedback from customers would be valuable input for revising its product and services to meet customer requirements.
- On line Grievance Redressal Mechanism includes system of obtaining Feedback to assess quality of redressal from the complainants/ customers

7. Town hall Meeting

- A Town Hall meeting will be arranged on regular basis at one place with cluster of branches under supervision of Regional office / Zonal office. The purpose of such meeting is to enforce zero tolerance standards on complaints resolution. These meeting will be presided over by an official from Central Office.
- The customers will be invited in this meeting to get their views and opinion on the customer service provided by the branch and to identify areas for its improvement.
- Any grievance of the customer would be listened and redressed on the spot, if possible. The Zonal Office after getting feedback from Regional Office will submit report with their comments on action taken in the Town Hall Meeting to Operation Department, Central Office.

8. Sensitizing operating staff on handling complaints:

- Training Centers would conduct special courses for handling complaints and customer care. We are dealing with people and hence difference of opinion and areas of friction can arise. With an open mind and a smile on the face we should be able to win the customer's confidence.
- It would be the responsibility of the Nodal Officer to ensure that internal machinery for handling complaints/ grievances operates smoothly and efficiently at all levels. He should give feedback on training needs of staff at various levels to the HR Dept.

9. Analysis and Disclosure of Complaints

- Root Cause Analysis and effective action on common grievances to avoid recurrence of complaints on same issues can be avoided. Root Cause Analysis is based on number of complaints received on top issues that accounted for at least 50% of all the complaints received in the immediate preceding quarter.
- Bank shall place a statement before its Board analyzing the complaints received. Bank shall also disclose the Statement of complaints and its analysis along with its financial results. Further, the unimplemented awards of the Banking Ombudsman shall also be disclosed along with financial results. Bank shall place a statement of complaints before its Board / Customer Service Committee along with an analysis of the complaints received. The complaints shall be analyzed
 - (i) To identify customer service areas in which the complaints are frequently received;
 - (ii) To identify frequent sources of complaint;
 - (iii) To identify systemic deficiencies; and
 - (iv) For initiating appropriate action to make the grievance redressal mechanism more effective.
- Further, bank shall disclose the brief details along with their financial results pertaining to the number of complaints pending at the beginning of the year, received during the year, redressed during the year and pending at the end of the year. Similar information pertaining to the Banking Ombudsman Awards received and implemented shall also to be placed.
- Further, bank shall place the detailed statement of complaints and its analysis on its web-site for information of the general public at the end of each financial year.

10 Customer Service during Internal Audit:

10. Customer Service during Internal Audit:-

- The Internal Auditor/ Concurrent Auditor shall at the time of Audit of the Branch also review the systemic ways of complaint resolution rather than mere number of cases resolved. The Auditor will also ensure and report in the Audit Report the factual position of observance of guidelines given by Reserve Bank of India and BCSBI on Customer Service such as display of comprehensive Board Note, availability of copy of policies on Customer Service etc.

11. Institutional Arrangements

- The bank is required to disclose the brief details regarding the number of complaints along with their financial results. This statement shall include all the complaints received at the Central Office/ Controlling offices/ branches level.
- However, where the complaints are redressed within the next working day, bank shall not include the same in the statement of complaints
- Bank shall give wide publicity to the grievance redressal machinery through advertisements and also by placing them on its website.

12. Mechanism of Review of Grievances Redressal Machinery

- As per the existing guidelines, Bank shall critically examine on an on-going basis as to how Grievances Redressal Machinery is working and whether the same has been found to be effective in achieving improvement in customer service in different areas.
- Banks shall identify areas in which the number of complaints is large or on the increase and consider constituting special squads to look into complaints on the spot in branches against which there are frequent complaints.
- At larger branches and at such of the branches where there are a large number of complaints the bank shall make special emphasis by engaging staff designated as Public Relations Officers / Liaison Officers for looking into / mitigating the complaints/ grievances of customer expeditiously. The Bank shall include one or two sessions on customer service, public relations etc., in training programmes conducted in its training establishments.
- In cases where the contents of the complainant have not been accepted, a complete reply shall be given to complainant to the extent possible. Grievances/ complaints relating to congestions in the banking premises shall be examined by the bank's internal inspectors / auditors on a continuing basis and action taken for augmentation of space, whenever necessary, keeping in view the availability of larger accommodation in the same locality at the reasonable rent and other commercial considerations.