

# **Customer Grievances Redressal Policy of the Bank**

## **CUSTOMER GRIEVANCES REDRESSAL POLICY OF THE BANK**

### **PREFACE:**

The Bank believes that customer service experience is the key to acquire and nurture enduring relationship with our customers. As we deal with human beings, difference of opinion and friction may arise out of interactions and our customers

may express their dissatisfaction as complaints. A complaint is an opportunity for the Bank not only to do the service upsurge and win the customers trust back but also to improve the product, process, technology and people aspects at the bank. Grievances therefore are a great source of the voice of the customers.

## **1. Introduction:**

In the present scenario of competitive banking, excellence in customer service is the most important tool for sustained business growth. Bank has attached high priority to customer satisfaction and also taken a number of initiative aimed at achieving high standards of customer satisfaction and complaint free customer service. Customer complaints are part of the business life of any corporate entity as every business has to deal with situations in which things go wrong from a customer's point of view. As a service organization, imparting good customer service and enhancing level of customer satisfaction should be the prime concern of any bank. Providing prompt and efficient service is essential not only to attract new customers, but also to retain existing ones. Customer dissatisfaction would spoil bank's name and image.

The Bank's Customer Grievances Redressal Policy aims at minimizing instances of customer complaints and grievances through proper service delivery, review and prompt and effective redressal mechanism. The review mechanism will help in identifying shortcomings in product features and service delivery.

The Bank's Customer Grievances Redressal Policy follows the under noted principles:

- ❖ Customers be treated fairly at all times
- ❖ Complaints raised by customers are to be dealt with courtesy and in 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 complaints efficiently and fairly as they can damage the bank's reputation and business if handled otherwise.
- ❖ The bank employee would work in good faith and without prejudice to the interests of the customers.
- ❖ Complaints emanating from rural areas and those relating to financial assistance to priority sector and Government poverty alleviation programme also form part of the above process.

In order to make Bank's redressal mechanism more meaningful and effective, a structured system will function at Branches/Regional Offices/Head Office, which will ensure that redressal sought is just and fair and is within the given frame-work of rules and regulation.

The policy document would be made available at all branches / Regional Offices/Head Office and at Bank's website. The concerned employees would be

made aware about the Complaint handling process to ensure better customer service and general awareness with in the Bank.

- 1.1 A complaint is an expression of dissatisfaction or grievance or resentment made to an organization, related to its products or service, or the complaints handling process itself, where a response or resolution is explicitly or implicitly expected.
- 1.2 The reason for customer complaint can be divided into following main categories:
  - a) The attitudinal/Behavioural aspects in dealing with customers.
  - b) **Operational aspects**-Inadequacy of the functions/ arrangements made available to the customers, working/operations or gaps in standards of services expected and actual services rendered.
  - c) Technology Related.
- 1.3 The customer is having full right to register his complaint if he/she is not satisfied with the services provided by the Bank. He/she can give his/her complaint in writing, orally or over telephone. If customer complaint is not resolved within given time or if he/she is not satisfied with the solution provided by the bank, he/she can approach Banking Ombudsman with his/her complaint or other legal avenues available for grievance redressal.

## **2. Resolution of Grievances:**

### **2.1. Internal Machinery to monitor & review Customer service/grievances**

- a) If the customer wants to make a complaint, we will inform:
  - i. Where to make complaint
  - ii. How a complaint should be made
  - iii. When to expect a reply
  - iv. Whom to approach for redressal
  - v. What to do if customers are not happy about the outcome
- b) If the customer complaint is received in writing, Bank will endeavour to send an acknowledgement/a response within a week. If customer complaint is relayed over phone at our designated customer care telephone number and keep customers informed of the progress within a reasonable period of time.
- c) After examining the matter, Bank will send a final decision within 30 days of receipt of complaint.
- d) The Bank has developed an in house portal for the online grievance redressal system namely Public Grievance Redressal System (PGRS), which is in final stage of Testing. The same will be provided to the customers to register their complaints online. This package records a complaint, generates a unique reference number and forward the same automatically to the concerned wings/ sections. It also provides the customer to track the complaints status online.
- e) We have a well-established Call on Bank's Toll free number at 18001025250 through which customers can also get the details of whom to approach and how to lodge the complaint.

## **2.2. Standing Committee on Customer Service:**

In order to benchmark the current level of service, review the progress periodically, enhance the timeliness and quality, rationalize the processes taking into account technological developments and suggest appropriate incentives to facilitate change on an ongoing basis, the Standing Committee on Customer Service is constituted.

The Standing Committee on Customer Service will be chaired by the Chairman and the Committee would also constitute one or two General Manager/s of the Bank, as its members.

The Committee will have the following functions:

1. To convene meeting every quarter.
2. The committee would submit report on the deliberations of the meeting to the customer service committee of the board at quarterly intervals.
3. Evaluate feedback on quality of customer service received from various quarters. The committee would also review comments/feedback on customer service, implementation of commitments in the Code of Bank's Commitments to customers received from BCSBI.
4. The committee would be responsible to ensure that all regulatory instructions regarding customer service are followed by the Bank. Towards this, the committee would obtain if necessary the feedback from Branch Managers/Regional Managers/ Functional heads.
5. The committee would consider unresolved complaints/grievances referred to it by functional heads responsible for redressal and offer its advice

## **2.3. Customer Service Committee of the Board:**

This sub-committee of the Board would be responsible for formulation of a Comprehensive Deposit Policy covering all aspects relating deposits matter including aspects such as the treatment of death of a depositor for operations of his account, the product approval process and annual survey of depositor satisfaction. The committee would also examine any other issues having a bearing on the quality of customer service rendered. This committee would also review the functioning of the Standing Committee on Customer Service.

## **2.4. Branch Level Customer Service Committees:**

In order to encourage a formal channel of communication between the customers and the bank, Branches/Regional Offices (RO) will be advised to establish Customer Service Committees at branch level. Further, bank shall take necessary steps for strengthening the branch level committees with greater involvement of customers.

The Branch/RO Level Customer Service Committee will meet at least once a month to study complaints/suggestions, cases of delay, difficulties faced/reported by

customers/members of the Committee and evolve ways and means of improving customer service.

The committee acts as a forum to enable customers meet and interact with the senior officials of the bank with the following objects:

- a) Collect customer feedback on services provided by the Bank
- b) Reduce information gap between customers and bank
- c) Most importantly build trust amongst customers

The Branch/RO level committees may also submit quarterly reports giving inputs/suggestions to the Standing Committee on Customer Service thus enabling the Standing Committee to examine them and provide relevant feedback to the Customer Service Committee of the Board for necessary policy/procedural action.

### **3. Complaint Redressal Mechanism and Grievance Escalation System in the Bank (Internal Machinery):**

#### **3.1. At Branch level:**

Branch Manager will be responsible for the resolution of the complaints/grievances in respect of customer's service by the Branch. He/she would be responsible for ensuring closure of all complaints received at Branches. It is his/her 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 shall be provided with alternate avenues to escalate the issue if the same is not resolved within the stipulated period. If the Branch Manager feels that it is not possible at his/her level to solve the problem, he/she may refer the case to Regional Office or Head Office for guidance. Similarly, if Regional Office finds that they are not in a position to solve the problem such cases may be referred to the Chief Nodal Officer of the Bank at Head office. Following steps are taken to facilitate the customers to make their complaints easily and quickly:

1. Suggestion Box and complaint Book are provided in all the branches. Any written complaint is instantly and promptly acknowledged.
2. At every office of the Bank a notice requesting the customer "to meet the Branch Manager" shall be displayed with regard to Grievances, if it remains un-redressed.
3. Customers can lodge their complaints directly to Branch-in-charge and it will be the responsibility of the Branch-in-charge to resolve the complaint within 7 days from the date of receipt.
4. The Branch-in-charge will analyze the complaint and if need be he/she will contact the complainant personally and resolve the complaint.
5. A complaint redressal letter will be sent to complainant, if the complaint is resolved at Branch level. The Branch will also send the details of the grievance received at periodical intervals to concerned Regional Office.

6. If the Branch-in-charge is not able to resolve the complaint within 7 days, the complaint will be forwarded to the concerned Regional office of the bank along with the remark of the branch manager within a time frame.(within a maximum of 10 days depending upon the nature of Grievances)
7. All branches should maintain a separate complaints register for entering all the complaints/grievances received by them directly or through RO / HO and other sources.
8. The complaint registers maintained by branches shall be scrutinized by the concerned Regional Head during his periodical visit to the branches and his observations/comments recorded in the relative visit reports.
9. Counter staff are provided with training and additional inputs.
10. If counter staff/Supervisor is unable to resolve a grievance, the branch in-charge shall intervene and try to resolve the issue.
11. Customers' Day is observed on 15<sup>th</sup> of every month. If 15<sup>th</sup> is holiday, the Customers' Day shall be observed on the next working day. On this day branch in-charge will make him-self available at the branch between 3 p.m. and 5 p.m. to meet customers without any prior appointment.

### **3.2. At Regional Office level:**

- a) Regional Head will be the nodal officer and hold exclusive charge of Customer Service Section at Regional office.
- b) Regional Head is handling the complaints received directly from customers of that region. Customer Service Committees are in place in all the Regional Offices to look into implementation of customer service.
- c) The complaints referred to Regional Office will be analyzed by Customer Service Section and based on the explanation received from the Branch, Regional Office will send a suitable reply to complainant.
- d) By and large, complaints shall be redressed within shortest possible time.
- e) Whenever it is not possible and more cross checking is required, steps are taken to settle the matter within a reasonable time.
- f) Regional Head, the nodal officer will contact the aggrieved customers as and when necessary, meet him/her personally along with the Branch Manager, for ensuring timely redressal of the complaint.
- g) Wherever staff lapses are noticed, accountability is fixed and erring employees are advised suitably.
- h) If Regional Office cannot resolve the complaint within 7 days from the date of receipt of complaints, the same will be referred to Customer Service Section, SP&D Wing at Head Office along with their comments/explanations. The Regional Office will also send the details of the complaints received directly by them and not settled within seven days to Customer Service Section, SP&D Wing at Head Office along with their comments/ replies.

### **3.3. At Head Office level:**

- i. The Bank has nominated General Manager, Customer Service Section, SP & D Wing Head Office, as Principal Nodal Officer and Chief Manager, SP & D Wing Head Office, as the Nodal Officer to monitor the implementation of Customer Service and complaint handling for the entire Bank. The customers with grievances can approach in the first instance and also can approach the Banking Ombudsman, in case if they are not satisfied with the Bank's response/reply.
- ii. An acknowledgement is sent to the customer immediately on receipt of the complaint.
- iii. A full-fledged Customer Service Section is functioning at SP&D Wing, Head Office, overseen by General Manager. Customer Service Section, SP&D Wing at Head Office will analyze the complaint and the replies received from Branch and Regional Office and appropriate decision is taken on the complaint. A complaint redressal letter is sent to the complainant from SP&D Wing, Head Office, duly explaining the decision taken on the complaint and suitable instructions are passed on to Branch, Regional Office for taking action in the deficient areas. Whenever the decision is taken to reject the claim, the same shall be communicated to the complainant.
- iv. Special Customers' Meets/ campaigns are organized for different segments of the market, viz., Retail lending, Agriculturists, etc.
- v. Bank will review periodically into the areas in which the number of complaints is large or on the increase. Bank shall arrange to include one or two sessions on customer service, public relations etc, in training programmes conducted
- vi. Bank will place a detailed statement of Customer complaints and Awards passed by the Banking Ombudsman, if any, before the Customer Service Committee of the Board along with an analysis of the complaints received along with financial results. The complaints shall be analyzed to identify customer service areas in which the complaints are frequently received, to identify frequent sources of complaints, to identify systemic deficiencies and for initiating appropriate action to make the grievance redressal mechanism more effective.

#### **4. Banking Ombudsman Scheme:**

Bank has displayed on our website and in all our Branches a notice explaining that we are covered by the Banking Ombudsman Scheme, 2006 of the Reserve Bank of India. The copy of the scheme is made available at all the branches. Reply will be issued to customers within 30 days of lodging a complaint with us. If customer does not get a satisfactory response from us and if customer wishes to pursue other avenues for redressal of grievances, customer may approach Banking Ombudsman appointed by Reserve Bank of India under Banking Ombudsman Scheme, 2006. Salient features of the Banking Ombudsman Scheme, 2006 are displayed in the branch notice boards. If customers face any difficulty our Staff will explain the procedure in this regard.

#### **5. Mandatory display requirements:**

The Bank has made it mandatory to display the following at Branches and at our website for the benefit of our customers:

1. Details on appropriate arrangements made for receiving complaints and suggestions.
2. The name, address and contact number and email address etc, of Principal Nodal Officer / Nodal Officer(s) and other details of Officials at Head office / Regional offices, who can be contacted for redressal of the complaint is displayed for proper and timely contact by the customers and for enhancing effective of the redressal machinery.
3. Details of Code of Bank's commitments to customers/Fair practice code (BCSBI)

#### **6. Time Frame:**

The Bank has adopted the following escalation Time matrix for the resolution of all complaints:

Parameter	Stipulated by Ministry of Finance	Adopted by Bank
General Complaints	30 days	21 days
Complaints forwarded by RBI/MOF MPs/VVIPs	21 days	15 days
Complaints from PMs office	15 days	7 days

#### **7. Interaction with customers:**

Customer's expectation/requirement/grievances can be better understood through personal interaction with customers by Bank's staff. Structured customer meets 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 the banking services better. The feedback from customers would be a valuable input for revising our product and services to meet customer requirements.

#### **8. Sensitizing the operating staff on handling complaints:**

Our staff will be properly trained for handling complaints. During all the Training Sessions at our Staff Training College, the importance of handling complaints is explained to all the participants and they are trained to deal with customer complaints. Principle Nodal Officer for the Bank will ensure that internal machinery for handling complaints/grievances operates smoothly and efficiently at all levels and he will be giving feedback on training needs of staff at various levels to the Human Resources Department.