

ALTERNATIVE ENTERTAINMENTS COMPLAINTS POLICY

Alternative Entertainments is committed to dealing effectively with any complaints you may have about our service.

If we made mistakes or have gotten things wrong, we will apologise. We will endeavour wherever possible to make amends. We also aim to learn from our mistakes and use the information we gain to improve our services.

WHEN TO USE THIS POLICY:

When you complain to us, we will usually respond in the way we explain below. Sometimes, you might be concerned about matters that are not decided by us (e.g. complaints relating to venues in which our projects are run; complaints relating to policies insisted upon by our funders) and we will then advise you about how to make your concerns known.

INFORMAL RESOLUTION:

We will attempt to deal with issues as soon as possible and in the easiest and most direct way. If you have a complaint, raise it with the person you are dealing with. They will try to resolve it for you there and then. However, they may need time to look into it (no more than 5 working days).

If there are any lessons to learn from addressing your complaint, the member of staff will draw them to our attention. If the member of staff can't help, they will explain why and you can then ask for your complaint to be formally investigated.

HOW TO COMPLAIN FORMALLY:

You can make a complaint in any of the ways below:

- You can ask for a copy of our complaint form from the person with whom you are already in contact.
- You can get in touch with our Complaints Officer at 087 957 2468 if you want to make your complaint over the phone.
- You can e mail us at altents@gmail.com
- You can write a letter to us at the following address:

Alternative Entertainments, Rua Red Arts Centre, Tallaght, Dublin 24, D24 KV8N

WHAT TO INCLUDE IN YOUR COMPLAINT:

- State your name, address and telephone number (and email, if applicable) and whether you are acting on behalf of someone else.
- Briefly describe what your complaint is about stating relevant dates and times, if applicable.

- List your specific concerns starting with the most important concern.
- Be clear about what you are hoping to achieve (for example an apology, explanation, etc.)
- State your preferred method of communication. It will assist the Complaints Officer if extra information and/or copies of relevant documents are attached to your complaint.

DEALING WITH YOUR COMPLAINT:

We will formally acknowledge your complaint within 5 working days and let you know how we intend to deal with it.

We will ask you to tell us how you would like us to communicate with you and establish whether you have any particular requirements, for example, if you have language difficulties.

We will deal with your complaint in an open and honest way. We will make sure that your interactions with us in the future are not adversely affected just because you have made a complaint.

If you are making a complaint on behalf of somebody else, we will need their agreement to you acting on their behalf.

INVESTIGATION:

We will tell you who will be investigating your complaint. For straightforward complaints, an employee of Alternative Entertainments will investigate and get back to you. If the complaint is more serious, we may ask someone from outside the organisation to investigate.

We will ensure that we fully understand your complaint and will ask you to confirm that we are correct in our understanding.

If there is a simple solution to your problem, we may ask you if you are happy to accept this.

We will aim to resolve concerns as quickly as possible and expect to deal with the vast majority within 30 working days. If your complaint is more complex we will:

- let you know within this time why we think it may take longer to investigate
- tell you how long we expect it to take
- give you regular updates every 15 working days on any progress made.

The person who is investigating your complaint will aim to establish the facts. The extent of this investigation will depend on the complexity and seriousness of the issues raised. In some instances, we may ask to meet you to discuss your complaint.

Occasionally, we might suggest mediation to try to resolve disputes. When investigating your complaint, we will look at relevant evidence. This could include files, notes of conversations, letters, emails or whatever may be relevant to your complaint. If necessary, we will talk to the staff or others involved.

OUTCOME:

If we formally investigate your complaint, we will inform you of our findings using your preferred form of communication. If necessary, we will produce a longer report. We will explain how and why we came to our conclusions.

If upon completion of the investigation your complaint is upheld, we will tell you what happened and why it happened. If we find there is a fault in our policies and/or procedures, we will tell you what it is and how we plan to correct it in order to prevent similar mistakes in the future. We will aim to make amends in the form of an apology, reimbursement or provision of services to reverse any mistakes we have made.

OMBUDSMAN

If we do not succeed in resolving your complaint, you may complain to the Ombudsman. The Ombudsman is independent and can look into your complaint if you believe that you personally, or the person on whose behalf you are complaining:

- have been treated unfairly or received a bad service through some failure on our part
- have been disadvantaged personally by a service failure. . The Ombudsman expects you to bring your complaint to our attention first and to give us a chance to put things right. You can contact the Ombudsman by:
- telephone: 01 6395600 Lo-Call: 1890223030
- email: ombudsman@ombudsman.ie
- the website: www.ombudsman.ie
- writing to: The Office of the Ombudsman 18 Lower Leeson Street Dublin 2

LEARNING LESSONS:

We take your complaints seriously and try to learn from any mistakes we have made. Our Board and Management team considers a summary of all complaints on a regular basis as well as details of any serious complaints.

Where there is a need for change, we will develop an action plan setting out what we will do, who will do it and when we plan to do it by. We will let you know when changes we have promised have been made.

IF YOU NEED HELP:

Our staff will make your complaint known to us. If you need extra assistance, we will put you in touch with someone who can help. You may wish to contact organisations such as Tusla, Music Generation Ireland, South Dublin County Council or the Arts Council who may be able to assist you.

WHAT WE EXPECT FROM YOU:

In times of distress, some people may act out of character. There may have been upsetting circumstances leading up to a complaint. We do not view behaviour as unacceptable just because someone is forceful or determined.

We believe that all complainants have the right to be heard, understood and respected. However, we also consider that our staff have the same rights. We, therefore, expect you to be polite and courteous in your dealings with us. We will not tolerate aggressive or abusive behaviour, unreasonable demands or unreasonable persistence.