
POL/SMC/CS/001

Complaints Policy

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Commitment to Customers

firmus energy is committed to delivering the highest possible standards of service to customers. However, sometimes things may go wrong.

If a customer is unhappy with any level of our service and wishes to make a complaint, firmus energy will aim to resolve the complaint as fairly and as quickly as possible.

firmus energy will monitor all complaints regularly to improve the level of service and minimise reoccurrence.

firmus energy will aim to:

- Train all relevant staff how to handle complaints
- Record complaints and enquiries
- Treat each complaint as confidential
- Ensure consumer rights by complying with all applicable data protection and privacy legislation in force from time to time in Northern Ireland
 - including the General Data Protection Regulation (EU) 2016/679 for so long as Northern Ireland remains part of the EU
- Resolve complaints by giving a satisfactory explanation, and rectify the problem as necessary, if possible to do so
- Resolve complaints by telephone or pass the complaint to the relevant person/department/contractor who will contact the customer within 1 working day
- Outline to customers how their complaint will be handled
- Apologise for any inconvenience caused.
- Respond to written complaints within 10 working days by telephone or in writing
- Publish a copy of this policy on our website and provide a copy when requested to do so

Definition of a Complaint

A complaint is the expression (through various possible channels: letter, email, phone call or physical claim) of a person's dissatisfaction.

Policy

How to Make a Complaint

A customer can make a complaint by contacting firmus energy in the following ways:

- By phone :-
 - 0800 032 4567 (Customer Services);
 - As part of proactive outbound customer service calls by firmus energy staff;
 - By contacting any member of staff within firmus energy.
- By e-mail:-
 - furtherinfo@firmusenergy.co.uk
 - By emailing any member of firmus energy staff
- By letter to:-
 - Customer Services Manager
 - firmus energy
 - A4 & A5 Fergusons Way
 - Kilbegs Road
 - Antrim
 - BT41 4LZ
- In Person:-
 - "Walk-in" to firmus energy offices;
 - Report issue directly to firmus energy staff onsite

Where the customer has complained directly to an onsite firmus energy staff member, the individual employee will inform the relevant department of the complaint via phone/email.

How Complaints will be handled

firmus energy will resolve any complaint as soon as possible. This will be done based on a six step approach.

Step 1: Try to resolve the complaint straight away

If a customer contacts firmus energy by telephone, we will try to resolve the problem straight away while the customer is on the phone, if possible to do so.

In some circumstances it may be appropriate for the telephone call to be terminated if the complainant is insulting, threatening or using abusive language towards the call handler. The firmus energy employee will advise the customer up to 3 times, to refrain from using such language, otherwise the call will be terminated.

Step 2: Acknowledgement of a complaint

firmus energy will acknowledge a complaint via telephone or email within five working days of receiving it, however we will usually acknowledge within one working day.

firmus energy will:

- Advise the customer what steps will be taken and when the customer should expect to hear from us next.
- Provide the customer with a complaint reference number, if requested.
- Provide the customer with a copy of our complaints policy, if requested.

Step 3: Investigating the complaint

The steps taken to investigate the complaint will depend on the nature of the concerns raised.

- An investigation may have to be conducted by the Period Contractor.
- firmus energy will aim to resolve the complaint within 10 working days.
- Some complaints, particularly those regarding claims, may take longer to resolve. Where this is the case, we will aim to fully resolve all complaints within 3 months. During this time customers will be updated throughout the process.
- The customer advisor who takes the initial complaint will provide their name and contact details to the customer at every stage of contact.

Step 4: Responding to the complaint

Once we have investigated the complaint, firmus energy will provide the customer with a written or verbal response.

firmus energy will:

- Respond to each concern raised.
- Apologise if a mistake has been made.
- Provide an explanation if required.
- Advise what steps were taken to rectify the issue
- Award reimbursement and/or compensation in appropriate circumstances.

Should the customer remain dissatisfied with our response we will advise what further steps will be taken in escalating the complaint.

In some cases complaints may take longer to resolve, especially where there are legal issues. Where this is the case, customers will be sent an update as appropriate.

Step 5: Escalating your complaint

If the customer is not satisfied with the call handler's response, the complaint will be passed to the relevant Manager, who will contact the customer within one working day.

Step 6: How legal complaints will be handled

For the purpose of this policy, legal complaints are all complaints that are submitted in the form of a solicitor's letter.

- Legal complaints will be dealt with directly as described in steps 1 to 5.
- Legal complaints may take longer to resolve. Where this is the case, customers will be kept updated with the progress of their legal complaint.
- Legal complaints will be passed to the Head of Department.

Guaranteed Standards of Service

If we fail to meet our Guaranteed Standards of Service in relation to Complaints Handling, as detailed on our website: www.firmusenergy.co.uk, we will pay customers £25. Should your complaint result in the need for reimbursement and/or compensation, we will either credit your account with the full amount or send you a cheque.

Recording Complaints

firmus energy will log all complaints received. All relevant details relating to the complaint and its handling are recorded. All hard copies of documents received in relation to a complaint will be scanned and an electronic copy saved.

Updates to an existing complaint will be recorded as often as necessary until the issue has been resolved and the complaint can be closed.

Taking a Complaint Further

If the consumer remains unhappy, having given firmus energy a reasonable opportunity to resolve the complaint, then the matter may be referred to the Consumer Council (CCNI).

The Consumer Council is an independent consumer organisation, working to bring about change to benefit Northern Ireland's consumers.

The Consumer Council handles complaints about buses, trains, planes, ferries, natural gas, electricity, coal and water.

The complaint should only be handled by The Consumer Council after it has gone through firmus energy's full complaint handling procedure and when firmus energy has been given a reasonable time to deal with the complaint.

The Consumer Council can be contacted by the following means:

- Telephone – 0800 121 6022
- E-mail – complaints@consumercouncil.org.uk
- Website – www.consumercouncil.org.uk
- By audiotape or letter - The Consumer Council

Floor 3
Seatem House
28-32 Alfred Street
Belfast
BT2 8EN

Complaints Reporting

Daily Complaints Reporting:

firmus energy monitors the resolution of complaints on a regular basis. The relevant department will, on a daily basis, keep track of all open complaints and ensure they are addressed in a timely manner.

Monthly Complaints Reporting:

At the end of every month, firmus energy shall provide an overview of all complaints created in the previous month by department. This report will identify any trends so that firmus energy can improve its level of service and to minimise reoccurrence of complaints.

Implementation

firmus energy Managers are responsible for ensuring that all members of their teams are aware of this procedure and act accordingly.

Related Documentation

- POL/RP/RA/001 Distribution Connection Policy