



**THE ZOROASTRIAN CO-OPERATIVE BANK LTD.**

**GRIEVANCES REDRESSAL POLICY**

**2021-2022**

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## **GRIEVANCES REDRESSAL POLICY**

### **1. PREAMBLE**

“Prompt and efficient customer service has become the key to the success of any organization”. This is applicable specifically to banks, as banks are in the service industry. Today’s customer is more demanding and at the same time knowledgeable and very well aware of his/her 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 organization. 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 (Banking Codes and Standards Board of India), 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.

### **2. 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.

This Policy has been suitably revised in line with RBI’s guidelines enumerated in the Master Circular on Customer Service in Banks dated 1st July 2014, and is being tabled for the approval of the Board.

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.



### **3. 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 promptly.
- 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.

### **4. 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 policies/products/services and its employees and the Bank will ensure that the customer issues are resolved expeditiously and effectively.

### **5. OWNERSHIP OF THE POLICY**

The ownership of the Customer Grievance Redressal Policy rests with Retail Banking Department. The Policy will be updated, every year or at other intervals as required, by the - Retail Banking after the issuance of the Master Circular by RBI and also if any major modifications are proposed by the Regulators/Board.

### **6. VALIDITY**

This Policy will be valid for the Financial Year 2021-2022 and will be reviewed subsequently by the Retail Banking Department. Modifications, if any, warranted by changes in Government/RBI/IBA directives will be incorporated after approval of the Board.



## **7. KEY ELEMENTS OF THE POLICY**

The Policy Document covers the following aspects:

1. Internal machinery to handle customer complaints /grievances
2. Appointment of Nodal Officer to handle complaints and grievances
3. Mandatory display requirements
4. Resolution of grievances
5. Time frame
6. Interactions with customers
7. Registration of complaints

### **7.1 INTERNAL MACHINERY TO HANDLE CUSTOMER COMPLAINTS/ GRIEVANCES:**

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

#### **7.1.1. 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.
- A suitable Board with the details as above be displayed at the Branch

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 competent authority at the Corporate Office for guidance and necessary action under advice to the customer.

### **7.1.2. NODAL OFFICER LEVEL/CORPORATE OFFICE LEVEL**

The Nodal Officer/Competent Authority at the Corporate Office will consider unresolved complaints/grievances referred to it by branches. 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 resolve the issue.

In case the customer is still not satisfied then the Nodal Officer will place the issue before the Managing Director and CEO for guidance.

## **7.2 APPOINTMENT OF NODAL OFFICER TO HANDLE COMPLAINTS AND GRIEVANCES**

Based on instructions of IBA, our Bank has already put in place the internal machinery to handle customer complaints/grievances. The Nodal Officer has been appointed for the Bank to handle complaints and provide appropriate solutions.

### **7.2.1 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 the branches. 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 Branch Managers/ Functional Heads.

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The Nodal Officer will also consider unresolved complaints/grievances referred to it by the Branch Managers/Functional Heads responsible for redressal and offer his advice.

The Nodal Officer will submit a report on his/her performance to the Board/ at quarterly intervals. All complaints remaining unresolved for more than 30 days from the date of receipt of complaints from the customer will be reported to the Board by the Nodal Officer.

### **7.3 MANDATORY DISPLAY REQUIREMENTS**

The Banking Codes and Standard Board of India insist on display of information on prominent notice boards of Bank's branches as per RBI's specifications. The information contained in Comprehensive Notice Board is given as under:

1. The appropriate arrangement for receiving complaints and suggestions-Complaint register and suggestion box are provided at branches.
2. The name, address and contact number of the Nodal Officer are displayed at branch.
3. Contact details of the Banking Ombudsman of the area are displayed at the branch.
4. Information that the complaint form is made available on the Website.
5. Information that the Fair Practice Code and various other Codes related to customer education are also made available on the Banks website.

### **7.4 RESOLUTION OF GRIEVANCES**

This process is described elaborately under point No.7.9 of this Policy.



### **7.5 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 studied in detail for resolution.

Communication of the Bank's stand on any issue to the customer is a vital requirement. Complaints received that would require some time for examination of issues involved will invariably be acknowledged promptly.

A specific time schedule will be set for handling complaints and disposing them at all levels including branches and Corporate Office. Branch Managers will make all efforts to resolve the complaint within the specified time frames.

- The complaints received at the Branch level will be resolved within 7 days.
- If the Branch Head is unable to satisfy the customer, he will refer such complaints to the Nodal Officer. The Branch will ensure to refer the case to the Nodal Officer within 10 days from the date of receipt of the complaint at the Branch Office. The Nodal Officer will consider unresolved complaints/grievances referred to it by Branches. 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 Board of Directors for their guidance.
- All complaints remaining unresolved for more than 30 days from the date of receipt of the complaint from the customer will be reported to the Board by the Nodal Officer.
- 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/ Central Information Commission of such amendment within 30 days of the receipt of the request.



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## **7.6 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 Branches 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 Branch Manager will maintain rapport with the customers through visits and meeting the customers at branches.

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 feedback from customers will be valuable inputs for the Bank for revising its products and services to meet customer requirements.

## **7.7 TRAINING TO OPERATING STAFF ON HANDLING COMPLAINTS**

The Bank will provide comprehensive training to its employees. In such training programs specifically meant for handling customer complaints and grievances the guidelines given by Government/RBI/IBA on grievance redressal will be enunciated. The guiding principles of the Bank's approach to grievance redressal will also be explained. Online tests will also be conducted 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:

1. **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.
2. **Accessibility:** The Bank will enable the customers to avail of services through multiple published channels.
3. **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.

4. **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.
5. **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.
6. **The Policy document** will be made available at all branches. The concerned employees will be made aware about the complaint handling process.

### 7.8 REGISTRATION 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:

1. **Customer Service Centre:** Customers can contact our Customer Service Centre officials over the phone 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/mail/post, Customer Service Centre will issue a complaint/grievance reference number. A copy of the complaint will also be marked to the Nodal Officer.
2. **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.
3. **Nodal Officer** In case the customer is not happy or feels that his/her grievance is not suitably redressed at the Branch Office, he can write directly to the Nodal Officer. The Nodal Officer's name and address will be displayed at the branches.
4. **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.
5. **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 by the CEOs.

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### **7.9 SOME COMMON GUIDELINES FOR COMPLAINT RESOLUTION**

1. The customer will be given an acknowledgment of the complaint made, by the designated officials of the level at which the complaint is made.
2. The complaint will be resolved by coordinating with the concerned officials of the relevant branches /departments.
3. 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.
4. The final written response to the customer regardless of where the complaint is being received will contain the mandatory clause to make the customer aware of his/her rights to approach the Banking Ombudsman.