



Complaint and Grievance Procedure

FPMT Regional Office North America Inc. (“FPMT-RONA”) is committed to maintaining a respectful and supportive environment.

Any employee, volunteer, or person who has directly received a service from us including includes clients, partners, contractors, vendors, and members of the general public, who believes that they have experienced discrimination, harassment, or any violation of civil rights or ethical standards by a representative of our organization is encouraged to report the incident and has the right to raise concerns or grievances without fear of retaliation.

The complaints procedure may not be accessed by third parties with whom there has been no legitimate connection for the provision of services (i.e. complaints can only be brought by the person directly receiving a service about which they are dissatisfied). We will not process anonymous complaints.

All information related to a complaint will be handled sensitively; we understand the importance of discretion. Information will be stored securely, sharing information on a need-to-know basis and in accordance with our Confidentiality Policy.

Complaints Resolution Process:

Informal Resolution

In most cases, issues are best resolved by the person responsible for the matter that is causing concern. If such a concern has been received by that person, we expect that all reasonable efforts will have been made to resolve it swiftly if possible and appropriately, using reflection and compassionate communication (informal resolution).

We appreciate that this isn’t always possible or appropriate, and we therefore have the following three stage process in order to deal with all formal complaints raised:

Stage One

Any complaint will be acknowledged and responded to within two working weeks (i.e. 10 working days).

If the complaint is regarding general service provision rather than the actions of an individual, then the complaint should be made to the Coordinator of the Department for the service provided.

If the complaint is regarding the actions of an individual person (staff or volunteer of FPMT-RONA), initially the complaint should be made to the regional coordinator.

If the complaint is about the regional coordinator or a FPMT-RONA board member other than the board chair, then the complaint should be addressed to the board chair. In both these instances, appeals would progress to Stage Three of this process.

If the complaint is about the FPMT-RONA board chair, then the complaint should be addressed to the secretary of the board who will decide with the other members of the board to appoint someone to undertake an investigation. In this instance, appeals would progress to Stage Three of this process.

Within the 10-day timescale, the regional coordinator or board chair (or their nominee) will investigate the matter as follows:

- make all necessary and appropriate inquiries to establish the substance of the complaint and any attempts already made to resolve the matter informally, ensuring that all attempts at informal resolution have already been made;
- form a view and decide who the best person to respond to the complaint would be;
- where necessary, initiate discussions or meetings with the complainant to fully understand their issue, seek clarity and be clear on what would constitute a resolution for them;
- arrange any necessary mediation between the parties and any necessary, subsequent action(s).

It is hoped that an acceptable resolution can be found and the complaint can be concluded to the complainant's satisfaction at this level. However, if this is not the case, the complainant must inform the investigator within 2 working weeks (i.e. 10 working days) of their desire to initiate stage two, which will be progressed as follows:

Stage Two

At stage two, the details of the complaint and actions taken at stage one will be passed to the board chair, who will:

- acknowledge receipt of the stage two complaint and that they are reviewing details within two working weeks (i.e. 10 working days)
- make it clear when a response can be expected. The aim will be for complainants to receive a definitive reply within four working weeks (i.e. 20 working days). If this is not possible because, for example, an investigation has not been fully completed, a further communication will be sent with an indication of when a full reply will be given.
- review all documentation and the actions taken so far and discuss with the complainant the situation from their perspective and why resolution could not be reached. All conversations will be confirmed in writing and shared with the complainant

- discuss the same with the regional coordinator and consider what, within the framework of our policy and if necessary, the law, could be a way forward to resolve the issue at hand
- where necessary, take advice from FPMT Inc. in order to formulate a response for the complainant and any necessary action

The reply (within 20 working days where possible) to the complainant will inform them of the action(s) taken to investigate the complaint, the conclusions from the investigation, and any action taken as a result of the complaint.

Again, hopefully the complaint can be resolved at this level, but if not then the complainant must notify the board chair within 2 working weeks (i.e. 10 working days) of their desire to move to stage three, which will be progressed as follows:

Stage Three – Appeal

If the complainant remains unsatisfied after the stage two process has been completed (or stage one in the case of complaints against the regional coordinator or a board member other than the board chair), they have the right to request an appeal to the FPMT-RONA board, who will convene an appeals panel (who will not have been involved in any previous stage) to hear the complaint at stage three.

Once the request to progress to stage three has been received, we will acknowledge the request for appeal within two working weeks (i.e. 10 working days). The process undertaken at stages one and two will be reviewed and the appeal panel chair may choose to talk to the parties concerned to gain clarification on the issues.

A final decision and any action deemed necessary will be communicated to the complainant within six working weeks (i.e. 30 working days). If for any reason this timescale cannot be met, the complaint will be advised of the need for a revised timescale needed as soon as practicably possible.

Monitoring and Learning from Complaints

The number and outcome of any complaints will be reported to the FPMT-RONA board periodically to help identify any trends which may indicate a need to take further action.

Making a Complaint

To help us deal effectively and quickly with a complaint, the following details are requested:

- The specific area, service or resource to which the complaint applies
- The complainant's name and contact details: these are essential as we will not investigate anonymous complaints
- The nature of the complaint explained as clearly and precisely as possible, including details such as place and time if appropriate

- An indication if the complaint has already reported and if any action was already taken

Concerns Regarding Abuse

A concern regarding abuse should be disclosed when you believe you have experienced, or witnessed, an individual at FPMT-RONA acting in breach of the FPMT Ethical Policy, and thereby committing abuse. It would include a concern that FPMT-RONA is neglecting its duty of care.

Our objective is always to conduct a thoughtful and thorough investigation into any alleged wrongdoing, with remedial action where appropriate; as described in our Protecting from Abuse and Ethical Policies.

We will aim to use the timeline described in our Complaint Resolution Process above; however we recognize that a case-specific timeline may need to be established for the process of testimony and discovery related to a concern regarding abuse, especially if other agencies are involved. FPMT-RONA may need to pass an allegation on to statutory authorities both locally and in the home country of the alleged perpetrator.

If you have a concern regarding abuse relating to a staff member or volunteer of FPMT-RONA, please contact one of our Designated Protection People (the regional coordinator and the board chair).

FPMT-RONA will follow our Confidentiality Policy in connection with any expression of a concern regarding abuse.

Concern Regarding Abuse at an Affiliate

If you have a concern regarding abusive behavior of a staff member, volunteer, teacher or other person at an FPMT affiliate, please use that affiliate's reporting channels.

If your concern regarding abuse is related to more than one FPMT affiliate, or you have raised your concern via an affiliate's reporting channel and are dissatisfied with their handling of your concern, please contact the FPMT International Office Designated Protection Person as listed here: <https://fpmt.org/fpmt/problem-solving/share-feedback-and-concerns-related-to-fpmt-inc/#cra>