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	Appeals and Complaints Handling Procedures	PDCA_CP_041	05	24-Sep-2023

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1. Terms and Definition

- “Shall” in this document means obligation by PDCA
- “PM” in this document means “Program Manager.”
- “TM” in this document means “Training Manager”
- “Verifier/inspector/assessor/auditor/trainer” is used for the respective programs respectively (i.e. verification/audit/assessment/audit/training)

2. Scope

Scope of the code of conduct is all services of PDCA International Ltd. (i.e. auditing, inspection, assessment, verification, and training)

3. Purpose

The procedure intends to review and resolve the internal and external appeals and complaints and to take whatever action is required to prevent a recurrence of those issues.

This procedure shall cover the following:

- Receipt of a formal appeal & complaints from a client, vendor, brands etc.
- Receipt of verbal appeal & complaints and anonymous complaints
- Receipt of appeal & complaints Internal employees
- Investigation process of appeal & complaints
- Documentation in regards appeals & complaints


4. Responsible

The CEO (Chief Executive officer) is solely responsible for implementation and determining the effectiveness of this procedure. The integrity manager is assigned to manage the complaint handling process along with the CEO (Chief Executive officer).

5. Method for Complaint

5.1. General System

- All complaints received by any interested parties (i.e. client, brand, standard body etc.) shall be recorded in the **(PDCA_CF_044_Appeals & Complaints Log)**. This log of complaints is accessible by the CEO (Chief Executive Officer) & Integrity Manager.
- PDCA International Ltd. shall have a documented, publicly accessible process for receiving, validating, and investigating complaints, and deciding what actions to take though the website.

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5.2. Recording of appeals and/or complaints


- On receipt of an appeal and/or complaints the recipient shall enter it into the on-line management system via the website. The system itself allocates a number for tracking purposes. The source and description of the complaints are mandatory fields and therefore have to be completed.
- When the complaint is submitted on-line, it will send an auto-email to the CEO & Integrity Manager, so that he/she is aware of it and to review the appeals and complaint.
- Within 5 working days of receipt of the complaint by the CEO and Integrity Manager, it will be auto recorded in internal database system and the complaint will be started to investigate immediately.

5.3. Investigating Complaints

- The CEO along with the Integrity Manager shall investigate all complaints. The record of the investigation and progress will be communicated with the interested parties and relevant stakeholders from time to time. In some circumstances, a third party might also get involved during the investigation process if the CEO and the Integrity Manager determine based on the situation.
- PDCA International Ltd. shall manage investigations in a manner fair to all parties, avoiding conflicts of interest. Whenever possible, PDCA will provide the subject of an investigation with an opportunity to be heard where there are potential negative consequences.

5.4. Corrective/Preventive Action

- After the investigation has been completed and the root cause has been determined, corrective/preventive action will be determined and recorded within the internal system.
- The complainant will be informed of the outcome of the complaint and of any corrective/preventive action that has been taken if the complaint is deemed justified from the investigation.
- The report will present the resolution of the complaint and the reasons for such resolution, summarizing the documented evidence submitted unless the appellant has requested it be held confidential in whole or in part, and summarizing a response from the management of the facility.
- The appellant has the right to submit a written response to the allegations and to have that response, or a summary of it, included in the report. If the appellant has agreed to corrective action, that commitment will be included in the report.

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- The report shall be written so as not to breach the confidentiality agreement in effect and shall be issued within 10 days of the rendering of the decision.

5.5. Verification of Corrective Action/Preventive Action

- The CEO shall be responsible for verifying the completion of the corrective/preventive action taken, and update.
- The Impartiality Committee and Management Review Members shall review all complaints raised within on-line or internal system as well as a report on any trends to ascertain:
 - The continued effectiveness of the corrective actions since the last meeting.
 - The repetitive nature of subsequent complaints.
- The output of the Impartiality Committee and Management Review shall demonstrate that all complaints have been dealt with and that any corrective/preventive action that was required as a result of the complaint has been effectively implemented.

5.6. Monitoring Corrective/Preventive Action


All corrective action taken shall be monitored by the Integrity Manager. Monitoring shall be conducted until the deficiency has been eliminated or reduced to a pre-determined acceptable level.

5.7. Informing the Relevant Stakeholders about their Right to Complaint

- The procedure for complaints will be published on the public area of the PDCA International Ltd.'s website (www.pdca-intl.com). There will also be a form in the public area where appeals and/or complaints can be placed. All complaints from the website will come directly to the CEO by logging in to the website's back end as well and if any appeals and/or complaints is submitted, he will also get the automatic email.
- The client agreement for PDCA International Ltd. which will be given to all clients with the quotations/contract will also show the procedures for complaints.
- The appeals and/or complaints procedures is also included in the opening and closing meeting agenda.

6. Records

- Records of complaints and appeals and responses to each will be kept for a minimum of 10 years after the resolution of the complaint.

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- PDCA International Ltd. shall develop an annual summary of complaint handling activities including:
 - Number of complaints received alleging violations of the Code or the Standards
 - Source of the complaints, including the percentage of anonymous complaints
 - Breakdown by type of complaints
 - Percentage of substantiated and unsubstantiated allegations
 - Disciplinary actions taken, by type and number.

- All resolutions, preventive & corrective actions of all respective appeals and complaints shall be demonstrated in the internal audit at PDCA International Ltd.

- All resolutions, preventive & corrective actions of all respective appeals and complaints shall be discussed and demonstrated in the management review meeting.

7. Reference Document (s)

- PDCA_CF_044_Appeals & Complaints Log