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COMPLAINTS POLICY

Aim of the Policy

Athona Ltd is a responsible supplier of temporary and permanent staffing solutions and as such welcomes complaints to enable us to learn and improve our provision of reputable staffing solutions. It aims to handle complaints quickly, effectively and in a fair and honest way.

What is covered by this Policy?

- Who Can Make a Complaint
- How a Complaint Can be Made
- Confidentiality
- Complaints About Sub Contractors
- Equalities Statement
- The Complaints Process
- Monitoring Satisfaction and Performance.
- If the complainant disagrees with the outcome
- Matters that are Outside of the Policy
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Who Can Make a Complaint?

Any person or body who interacts with Athona for supply services of temporary or permanent staffing solutions, this can include temporary workers, NHS and private clients, and regulatory bodies. This policy can also extend to any member of the public or their representatives, staff, businesses, public and voluntary bodies who may be a third party to our services can also make a complaint in the same way.

How a Complaint can be made

If you have a complaint or concern, please contact Tracie Spires, Director of Quality and Compliance.

You can write to her at: Athona Ltd, 2nd Floor Kingsgate House, 1 King Edward Road, Brentwood, Essex CM14 4HG
Or send an email to tracie.spires@athona.com
Or call our switchboard on 01277 217777

Confidentiality

All complaints are treated with confidentiality in mind. Anonymous requests will be acted upon as an opportunity to improve our services, however it is better to provide contact details so that the complainant can be informed of the outcome.

Complaints about Sub Contractors and Customers

Athona recognises complaints regarding Athona's sub-contractors, and any organisation contracted to work on behalf of Athona, and will seek to resolve such complaints. These complaints are useful to guide learning in future service delivery and contractual arrangements, and feedback on performance is given to sub contractors on a regular basis. Athona will forward complaints received in respect of other organisations including NHS Trusts or Private healthcare providers to the appropriate bodies.

Equalities Statement
Athona aims to handle all complaints fairly and honestly regardless of who makes a complaint. Athona treats all complainants equally and will not show bias to any individual or group.

The Complaints Procedure
The complaints procedure enables anyone to make complaints quickly and simply, we will investigate and resolve complaints in accordance with strict timescales. Subject to any restrictions relating to confidentiality or the UK Data Protection Act 2018. The complainant is expected to cooperate with Athona by providing the necessary information surrounding the complaint to enable the complaint to be fully investigated.

Upon Receipt of a Complaint
We shall respond promptly to all complaints, oversights or omissions and shall immediately make good / resolve any default on our own part. In doing so we will:

Send you an email or letter acknowledging your complaint and asking you to confirm or further explain the details set out. We will also let you know the name of the person who will be dealing with your complaint. You can expect to receive acknowledgement within 2 working days of us receiving your complaint.

We will record your complaint in our central database on the day of receipt. If the complaint relates to a temporary worker who has a regulatory body for their profession, we will notify our Responsible Officer or Senior Clinical Advisor as appropriate immediately to ascertain if any restrictions on practice of the temporary worker should be applied whilst under investigation.

We will fully investigate the complaint as soon as all available evidence has been brought together.

If the complaint relates to a temporary worker, we will ensure that the temporary worker is promptly and fully informed of the complaint relating to them. We shall expect and follow up that that temporary worker takes demonstrable action to ensure there is no reoccurrence of the action complained of.

If the complaint is raised upon receiving a less than satisfactory confidential reference from the customer, the temporary worker shall not be reintroduced to work until such time that the customer is satisfied that the actions complained about have been satisfactorily remedied and will not reoccur. In doing so we shall treat the confidential reference issued by the customer as confidential and shall not disclose the confidential reference or any information within it, to any third party without the prior written consent of the customer and shall enable any evidence of poor performance or malpractice to be reported to the Responsible Officer or Senior Clinical Advisor, and regulatory body for that profession and for subsequently monitoring such complaints with that person and or body. We will consider weather an Alert Notice needs to be issued and we will cooperate with any action as reasonably required with the customer.

We will insist that the temporary worker provides evidence or a statement of their version of events within 5 working days, the temporary worker will be made aware that this will be made available to the customer as part of the investigation process. For serious complaints or allegations, the temporary worker may wish to seek advise on their response, and in doing so this may prolong the length of time that we would usually expect a response, in this instance, we will notify you of any changes to expected timescales.

If the complaint relates to the service you have received from Athona, we will ensure that we fully investigate and that the parties involved in the complaint are promptly and fully informed of the complaint relating to them. We shall expect and follow up that that any party involved learns from the complaint and investigation findings and takes demonstrable action to ensure there is no reoccurrence of the action complained of.

We will use all reasonable endeavours to make good / resolve the complaint, oversight or omission within 10 working days of its receipt, unless the nature of the complaint requires additional investigation or action of a third party, for example, Patient Safety Incidents, CQC or relevant professional and regulatory body, HMRC, NHS Protect, the Police or public health bodies, in which case the complaint will be made good, resolved as soon as possible thereafter. We will be responsible for monitoring and following up such complaints, oversights and omissions with that relevant third party body until an outcome has been reached.

We will provide updates to the customer regarding the progress made in making good / resolving the complaint, oversight or omission.

We will notify the customer in writing when the complaint has been made good / resolved and details of the action taken and to prevent its reoccurrence and keep a full written record of the nature of the complaint and details of the action taken to make good / resolve any complaint, oversight or omission reported and to prevent its reoccurrence.

By offering a solution Athona does not necessarily accept that it has acted inappropriately. Section two of the Compensation Act 2006 makes it clear that an apology in itself does not amount to an admission of negligence or breach of statutory duty. For further information on the Deterrent effect of potential liability and or Mesothelioma damages please refer to the Compensation Act 2006.

Monitoring Satisfaction and Performance
We operate a Quality Management System in accordance with ISO9001:2015 to analyse and identify any patterns of complaints, oversights or omissions involving either the supplier or sub contractor or temporary worker.

If the Complainant Disagrees with the Outcome
We accept that not every complaint may be resolved to the complainant's satisfaction, in this instance the complainant may write to the Managing Director at the address given above. Full details of the investigation will be reviewed and the complainant will receive a response from the Managing Director within 10 working days, to determine if the outcome of the complaint will be upheld or requires reinvestigation. The Managing Director will write to you confirming our final position on your complaint explaining our reasons.

For an alternative process for dealing with a complaint, in cases where a complainant does not wish to liaise with our company, or if you are still not satisfied, you can contact the REC, the industry trade association, of which we are a member by writing to the Professional Standards Manager, REC, 20 Queen Elizabeth Street, London, SE1 2LS

Matters that are Outside the expected 10 working day resolution timescale of this Policy
Complaints which are subject to legal proceedings and Complaints that are escalated to Regulatory Bodies.

Documents relating to this policy

- ISO9001:2015 QMS - P09 – Nonconformity, Client Complaint, Corrective and Preventative Action Procedure.
- Fitness to Practice Concerns – Reporting and Investigation Procedure
- Patient Safety Incident Response Standards