

KSC/AIM/CGDC/RBI/ 2200 /2021-22

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Circular No. 8/KSCB/AIM/ 2021-22

Here we are sharing a Customer Grievances and Redressal Policy for your reference and immediate implementation with key elements:

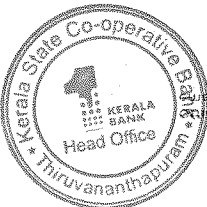
1. Display address and contact details of the Customer Grievances and Redressal Cell.
2. Display address and contact details of the Banking Ombudsman of RBI.
3. Install a compliant/suggestion box.
4. Maintain a complaint register with all details including date of receipt of complaint, received from, nature of complaint, date of disposal, mode of disposal etc.
5. Any written complaint at various level should be acknowledged properly.
6. As the customer day is observed on 15th of every month a customer meet should be arranged on every 15th in between 03.00 PM to 05.00 PM.
7. A customer service committee at Branch/CPC/RO level should be constituted as per the policy and review the complaint/suggestion and its redressal
8. Special customer meet should be conducted in special occasions.
9. Time schedule for redressal of complaint:

Nature of complaint/complaint received from	Stipulated by Ministry of Finance (MoF) and Adopted by Bank
General complaints	30 days
Complaints forwarded by RBI/MoF/MPs/VVIPs	21 days
Complaints from Prime Minister's Office/State Govt.	15 days

10. The total compliance of the Customer Grievances and Redressal Policy.

All Regional Managers/Controlling Officials are advised to ensure the compliance of the above instructions with immediate effect.

General Manager,
AIM Department.



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Customer(complaints)Grievance Redressal Mechanism

Introduction

(Rbi/2014-15/272 Rpcd.co.rcb.bc.no. 36 /07.51.010/2014-15 october 22, 2014)

In the present scenario of competitive banking, excellence in customer service is the most important tool for sustained business growth. Ever since the inception, our Bank has attached high priority to customer satisfaction. Over the years, steps have been taken to come out with a number of initiatives aimed at achieving high standards of customer satisfaction and complaint free branch network. Customer complaint is part of the business life of any corporate entity. As a service organization, customer service and customer satisfaction is the prime concern of the Bank. We believe that providing prompt and efficient service is essential not only to attract new customers, but also to retain existing ones. This policy document aims at minimizing instances of customer complaints and grievances through proper service delivery and review mechanism and to ensure prompt redressal of customer complaints and grievances. The review mechanism will help in identifying shortcomings in product features and service delivery.

The Bank's policy on Grievance Redressal follows the under noted principles:

- Our customers will be treated fairly at all times
- Complaints raised by our customers will be dealt with courtesy and in time
- Our customers will be fully informed of avenues to escalate their complaints/ grievances within the organization and their rights to alternative remedy, if they are not fully satisfied with the response of the bank to their complaints
- Our Bank will treat all complaints efficiently and fairly as they can damage the Bank's reputation and business if handled otherwise.
- Our employees will work in good faith and without prejudice to the interests of the customer.

In order to make Bank's Grievance Redressal mechanism more meaningful and effective, a structured system will function at Branches/Regional Offices/Head Office, which will ensure that redressal sought is just and fair and is within the given framework of rules and regulation.

This policy document will be made available at all branches. All the employees will be made aware about the complaint handling process to ensure better customer service and general awareness in the Bank.

The Customer Complaint Arises Due To:

- The attitudinal aspects in dealing with customers.
- Inadequacy of the functions/arrangements made available to the customers or gaps in standards of services expected and actual services rendered.

- The customer is having full right to register his complaint if he/she is not satisfied with the services provided by the Bank. He/she can give his/her complaint in writing, orally or over telephone. If customer complaint is not resolved within a given time or if he/she is not satisfied with the solution provided by the bank, he/she can approach Banking Ombudsman with his/her complaint or other legal avenues available for grievance redressal.

Internal Machinery to Handle Customer Complaints/ Grievances

- ❖ If the customer wants to make a complaint, the Bank will inform:
 - Where to make complaint
 - How a complaint should be made
 - When to expect a reply
 - Whom to approach for redressal
 - What to do if customers are not happy about the outcome
- ❖ The Bank will inform customers where to find details of procedures for handling complaints fairly and quickly.
- ❖ If the customer complaint is received in writing, we will endeavor to send an acknowledgement/a response within a week.
- ❖ After examining the matter, we will send our final response or explain why we need more time to respond and shall endeavor to do so within 30 days of receipt of complaint and will tell customers to take their complaint further if they are still not satisfied.

COMPLAINT REDRESSAL MECHANISM

- ❖ **AT BRANCHES**
 - Suggestion Box and complaint Book are provided in all the branches. Any written complaint is instantly and promptly acknowledged.
 - Counter staff are provided with training and additional inputs.
 - If counter staff/Supervisor is unable to resolve a grievance, the branch in-charge intervenes and tries to resolve the issue.
 - Customers' Day is observed on 15th of every month. On this day branch-in-charge will make himself/herself available at the branch between 3 p.m. and 5 p.m. to meet customers without any prior appointment. Branches / Regional Offices will also constitute Customer Service Committees comprising of Branch Manager, one or two staff members and one or two important Customers of the branch on a select basis like representatives of Senior Citizens, President and Secretary of Farmers' Clubs, SHG leaders, CDS Chairpersons, Ward/Block Members and representatives from various interest groups.
 - Committee will meet towards the end of every customer day and discuss the complaints /suggestions received from customers on that day. Wherever decisions are to be taken at branch level, the same shall be initiated and those requiring intervention of higher officers, shall be forwarded to the respective Offices.
 - Special Customers' Meet will be conducted on special occasions.

- Every year, Customer Fortnight is observed to create awareness among Public as well as staff for achieving the objective of Complaint free branch network and also highlight our products and services.

❖ **AT REGIONAL OFFICES**

- Regional Manager holds exclusive charge of Customer Service Section at Regional Office.
- By and large, complaints are redressed within the shortest possible time.
- Whenever it is not possible and more cross checking is required, steps are taken to settle the matter within a reasonable time.
- Regional Managers visit branches periodically and submit a report on Customer Service.
- Regional Manager/ Regional office contact the aggrieved customers as and when necessary, meet him personally with the Branch Manager, for ensuring timely redressal of the complaint.
- Wherever deficiencies are noticed, accountability is fixed and erring employees punished.

Still there may be some aggrieved customers who write to Head office.

❖ **AT HEAD OFFICE**

- Customer Service Section at Head Office is handled by AIM Department Wing.
- An acknowledgement is sent to the customer immediately on receipt of the complaint.
- Thorough analysis of the complaints is done and necessary instructions are given to RO/ Branches for speedy redressal and followed up till final redressal letter is sent to the complainant duly explaining the decision taken on the complaint.

Grievance Escalation System

- Customers can lodge their complaints directly to Branch-in-charge and it will be the responsibility of the Branch-in-charge to resolve the complaint within 7 days from the date of receipt.
- The Branch-in-charge will analyze the complaint and if need be he/she will contact the complainant personally and resolve the complaint.
- A complaint redressal letter will be sent to complainant, if the complaint is resolved at Branch level. The Branch will also send the details of the grievance received by them at periodical intervals to Regional Office.
- If the Branch-in-charge is not able to resolve the complaint within 7 days, the complaint will be referred by the Branches to the concerned Regional Office along with their comments / replies for further action.
- The complaints referred to Regional Office will be analyzed by Regional Manager and based on the explanation received from the Branch, RO will send a suitable reply to complainant.
- If the reply received from the Branch is not satisfactory and if Regional Office cannot resolve the complaint within 7 days from the date of receipt of complaints,

the same will be referred to Head Office along with their comments / explanations. The Regional Office will also send the details of the complaints received directly by them and not settled within seven days to Head Office along with their comments/replies.

- Head Office will analyze the complaint and the replies received from Branch and Regional Office. On placing the matter before appropriate authorities, a decision is taken on the complaint. A complaint redressal letter is sent to the complainant from Head Office and suitable instructions are passed on to Branch, Regional Office, for taking action in the deficient areas.

BANKING OMBUDSMAN SCHEME

- We have displayed on our website and in all our Branches, a notice explaining that we are covered by the Banking Ombudsman Scheme, 2006 of the Reserve Bank of India.
- Within 30 days of lodging a complaint with us, if customer does not get a satisfactory response from us and if customer wishes to pursue other avenues for redressal of grievances, customer may approach Banking Ombudsman appointed by Reserve Bank of India under Banking Ombudsman Scheme, Salient features of the Banking Ombudsman Scheme, are displayed in the branch notice boards and the scheme itself is displayed on our Website .If customers face any difficulty our Staff will explain the procedure in this regard.

Board Meeting to Review and Deliberate on Customer Service

- To review customer service / customer care aspects the memorandum submitted in this regard the Board of Directors, once every six months and initiate prompt corrective action wherever service quality / skill gaps have been noticed

Standing Committee on Customer Service

The Standing Committee may be chaired by the Chairman or MD or CEO and include officials other than handling cs as its members to enable an independent feedback on the quality of customer service rendered by the bank.(as per bank policy)

- The committee would be responsible to ensure that all regulatory instructions regarding customer service are followed by the Bank. Towards this, the committee would obtain necessary feedback from Regional Managers/ Functional heads.
- The committee would consider unresolved complaints/grievances referred to it by functional heads responsible for redressal and offer its advice
- The Standing Committee may review the practice and procedures prevalent in the bank and take necessary corrective action, on an ongoing basis as the intent is translated into action only through procedures and practices.
- A brief report on the performance of the Standing Committee during its tenure indicating, inter alia, the areas reviewed, procedures / practices identified and simplified / introduced may be submitted periodically to the Customer Services Committee of the Board..

Branch Level Customer Service Committees:

- In order to encourage a formal channel of communication between the customers and the bank at the branch level, the Bank will take necessary steps for strengthening the Branch level committees with greater involvement of customers. Branch level Customer Committee will meet at least once in a month to study the complaints/ suggestions and evolve ways and means of improving customer service

Nodal Officer and Other Designated Officials to Handle Complaints and Grievances.

❖ At Head Office- Nodal Officer

The General Manager, AIM Department Wing, Head Office, who is monitoring the implementation of customer service will be the nodal officer for redressing complaints and grievances.

The position may be updated in return on matrix of policies in ENSURE portal of NABARD

❖ At Regional Offices

The Regional Manager at Regional Offices is handling the complaints received directly from customers of that Region. Customer Service Committees are in place in all the Regional Offices to look into implementation of customer service.

Help Desk

Identify a counter clerk and a vantage point with a display board "Help Desk" to attend the customers for helping them to transact their banking business without much delay and with more satisfaction.

Mandatory Display Requirements

- The Bank has made it mandatory to display the following at Branches for the benefit of our customers:
- Details on appropriate arrangements made for receiving complaints and Suggestions
- The name, address and contact number of Nodal Officer(s)
- Contact details of Banking Ombudsman.
- Details of Code of Bank's commitments to customers/Fair practice code

Resolution of Grievances

Branch Manager is responsible for the resolution of complaints/grievances in respect of customer's service by the branch. He would be responsible for ensuring closure of all complaints received at the branches. It is his foremost duty to see that the complaint should be resolved completely to the customer's satisfaction and if the customer is not satisfied, then he should be provided with alternate avenues to escalate the issue. If the

Branch Manager feels that it is not possible at his level to solve the problem he can refer the case to Regional Office for guidance. Similarly, if Regional Office finds that they are not able to solve the problem such cases may be referred to the Nodal Officer of the Bank.

Time Frame

Complaints received will be seen in right perspective and will be analyzed from all possible angles. Specific time schedule is set up for handling complaints and disposing them at all levels including Branches/Regional Offices and Head Office. The Branch Manager will try to resolve the complaint within the specified time frames decided by the Bank.

TIME SCHEDULE FOR REDRESSAL OF COMPLAINTS

Nature of Complaint / Complaint Received from	Stipulated by Ministry of Finance (MoF) and Adopted by Bank
General Complaints	30 days
Complaints forwarded by RBI/MoF/ MPs/ VVIPs	21 days
Complaints from Prime Minister's Office/state govt	15 days

All the complaints received will be acknowledged immediately. In cases where complaints received would require **time for examination**, the same will be informed to customer through an interim reply.

Branches/Regional Offices will send action taken report on complaints received at their end to Head Office at the end of every month.

Interaction with Customers

Customer's expectation/requirement/grievances can be better understood through personal interaction with customers by Bank's staff. Structured customer meets will give a message to the customers that the bank cares for them and values their feedback/suggestions for improvement in customer service. Many of the complaints arise on account of lack of awareness among customers about bank services and such interactions will help the customers appreciate the banking services better. The feedback

from customers would be a valuable input for revising our product and services to meet customer requirements.

Sensitizing the Operating Staff on Handling Complaints

Our staff will be properly trained for handling complaints. During all the Training Sessions, the importance of handling complaints is explained to the participants and they are trained to deal with customer complaints. Nodal Officer for the Bank will ensure that internal machinery for handling complaints/grievances operates smoothly and efficiently at all levels and he will be giving feedback on training needs of staff at various levels to the Human Resources Department.

The recent Guidelines regarding the Need for Improvement in Behavioural Attitude of Staff and Awareness about the Technology Products to render effective Customer Service is given in APPENDIX – I for compliance by Branches/Offices.

APPENDIX – I

Need for Improvement in Behavioural Attitude of Staff and Awareness about the Technology Products to render effective Customer Service

- Zero Tolerance approach for misbehaviour of staff towards our customers
- Staff to be aware about the Technology Products and popularize the same
- Measures to be taken for better rating in respect of the incognito visit of the Banking Codes and Standards Board of India (BCSBI)
- Rendering of Courteous and prompt customer service

A satisfied customer is an asset to the Bank, as he/she acts as an ambassador for the Bank. The Banking Industry is very competitive at present. With the advancement of technology, all the banks are offering more or less similar products/services. Hence, success of any organization largely depends on the effective customer service rendered at every level.

Kerala Bank has a good brand equity as a customer friendly Bank. We are committed to increase our customer base by extending best customer service. complaints through Reserve Bank of India, GOI, GOK, etc. alleging misbehaviour of staff towards the customers, which are regularly monitored by the Competent Authorities of our Bank. Inappropriate behaviour towards the customers in branches/offices of our Bank not only dents our image as a customer friendly bank but also keeps the **gen "y"** customers away from our fold.

For improving,

Head Office has issued many guidelines, circulars and communications for improvement of customer services, behaviour of staff at branches/offices. In spite of taking all these

initiatives for motivating our staff, some unpleasant incidents are occurring at branches which are affecting the good image of our Bank.

In order to avoid such common complaints, we are reiterating the following tips which are to be adhered to by each and every employee, branch/office of the Bank;

- Staff to be punctual. They should occupy their respective seats before the commencement of Business Hours of the Bank.
- Whenever customers approach the counter, they should be guided properly.
- The ambience of the branch should be neat & clean. Wherever support is required from Regional Office, branch has to take up the issue before hand.
- Comprehensive notice board displaying the required information, for Complaints and Grievance Redressal, information regarding Names of the Concerned Officials with phone numbers are to be displayed in the branch premises.
- Take due care towards the Senior Citizens and pensioners and deal with empathy. Priority services may be provided to the Senior Citizens and Differently Abled persons.
- Customers should not be asked to come later/next day for any service by the counter staff. The case may be referred to the Branch-in-charge or Senior Officer of the Branch.
- Avoid to speak "**NO**" or "**NOT POSSIBLE**" at the counter.
- Organize monthly customer meet as per the schedule. Organize a demo on Technology Products of our Bank regularly with the help of Regional Office/Head Office.
- Discuss the Circulars during monthly staff meet without fail.
- Maintain complaint register in the branch, inward it serially and redress the complaint, if it can be redressed at the branch level.
- Take the help of the Region or Head Office if the grievances are not resolved at the branch level.

These are only indicative tips. Branches can initiate appropriate steps for rendering best customer service at their end.

All the employees shall be updated with the latest information regarding our products including Technology Products and Services. Initially Staff may use our Tech Products first then popularize the same to our customers.

All the staff, branches/offices is requested to ensure courteous and prompt customer service at all times without any laxity or deviations and not giving any scope for customer complaints.

Responsibility Of The Customer

The Bank shall endeavour for excellent customer service, fair treatment, quick redressal of grievances, if any.

However, the Bank shall not be held responsible for,

- ❖ loss to the customer if the customer acts fraudulently and/or acts without reasonable care which has resulted in loss to him/her.
- ❖ the losses arising out of misuse of lost pin, cheque book, passbook, compromise of passwords/secure or confidential information and any login credentials, suffered by the customer until the time the Bank has been notified and has taken steps to prevent misuse.
- ❖ any losses caused by extraneous circumstances which are beyond reasonable control of the Bank.

The Bank expects the customers to be courteous and honest in their dealings with the Bank. The Bank also expects the customer to co-operate and furnish correct personal details like address, e-mail ID, mobile /contact number etc. to facilitate speedy and effective communication.

VALIDITY OF THE POLICY

The Customer Rights Policy shall be valid till further revision by the Board of Bank.

Bibliography;

➤ RBI circulars:

: Charter of customer Rights Release 03.12.2014

:Customer serviceRBI/2015-16/59 DBR No.Leg.BC.21/09.07.006/2015-16 July 1, 2015

RBI/2014-15/272 RPCD.CO.RCB.BC.No. 36 /07.51.010/2014-15 October 22, 2014

:Limiting liability of customersRBI/2017-18/109 DCBR.BPD.(PCB/RCB).Cir.No 06/12.05.001/2017-18 14.12.2017

- Code of Bank's Commitment to Customers, prepared by the Banking Codes and Standards Board of India (BCSBI)
- IBA directions
- Policy framed by various Banks