

# Rutgers complaints policy and procedure

## 29-10-2019, Final Version 3

Complaints and feedback are used to identify problems in order to improve products and services and further enhance the organisation's mission. Therefore, all complaints are taken very seriously.

### 1 Introduction

Rutgers' aim is to work towards a society in which women and men, girls and boys and vulnerable groups all have the same rights regardless of origin, culture, religion, age, sex or sexual orientation. Rutgers' headquarters are situated in the Netherlands and its country offices are located in Indonesia.

### 2 Reach and background of complaints policy

This complaints policy concerns the whole organisation of Rutgers and all its staff. Therefore, when Rutgers is mentioned, it refers to all those involved.

Complaints that involve the country offices or partner organisations of Rutgers must be directed to the country offices or partners themselves. However, if any complaints are directed to Rutgers, they *will* be processed according to this complaints procedure.

Complaints regarding products bought in the web shop come under the abridged version of this complaints procedure.

#### Article 1 Definitions

**Complaint:** Every explicit written expression of dissatisfaction that a complainant directs towards Rutgers involving the activities or way of work of the organisation and the country office and all individual staff. This also includes all actions or negligence on the part of management, staff, the Supervisory Board, volunteers, suppliers or advisors recruited by Rutgers.

**Complainant:** Every natural or legal person who submits an oral or written complaint.

**Complaints Coordinator:** Quality Coordinator.

#### Article 2 Who can submit a complaint?

Every natural or legal person may submit a complaint.

#### Article 3 Complaints letter

A complaint can be submitted by sending a letter/email of complaint to the Complaints Coordinator of Rutgers in Utrecht. Complaints concerning a country office must be sent to the Complaints Coordinator of that country (see addresses below).

The following information should at least be included in the letter/email:

- Name and address of the complainant.
- Date of sending/registration.
- A description of the complaint (behaviour/action).
- Reasons why the complainant objects to this behaviour or action.
- The complaint must be submitted within three months of the incident taking place.

#### Article 4 Confirmation of receipt

The complaints coordinator registers the complaint in the Complaints Register and sends the complainant confirmation of receipt within two (2) working weeks. This acknowledgement also includes information about the procedure, who is going to handle the complaint and how long the procedure will take.

#### **Article 5 Complaints Coordinator**

The complaint is dealt with by the Complaints Coordinator. In the Netherlands, this is the quality manager of Rutgers. Depending on the nature and content of the complaint, the Complaints Coordinator may delegate the complaint to an inquiry committee. If the complaint is directed towards a Complaints Coordinator or a country representative of the country office, the director deals with the complaint. If the complaint is directed towards the director, the chair of the Supervisory Board handles the complaint.

#### **Article 6 Settlement process and postponement**

The Complaints Coordinator responsible or the inquiry committee delegated by him/her should send a reply within six (6) weeks after receipt of the complaint.

The Complaints Coordinator or the inquiry committee delegated by him/her may postpone the process up to a maximum of four (4) weeks. This postponement is motivated in writing to the complainant and the accused.

#### **Article 7 Inquiry and inquiry consultation**

In reaction to the complaint, the Complaints Coordinator involved or the inquiry committee delegated by him/her will carry out an inquiry into the behaviour or the action described in the complaint. The complainant and the accused may both plead their case independently from each other. This may be done in writing, by telephone or in a meeting. The meeting, however, does not have to take place if the complainant abstains.

The Complaints Coordinator makes a report of the inquiry consultation and sends this to the complainant and accused. The report is also filed in the Rutgers' Complaints Register. Reports that are directed towards country offices should be filed there. Headquarters also receives a copy of this report.

#### **Article 8 Arbitration**

The Complaints Coordinator or the inquiry committee delegated by him/her writes a report regarding the complaint inquiry including the decision of the inquiry committee which is final.

#### **Article 9 The decision**

The Complaints Coordinator clarifies the decision in writing and explains the possible consequences for the complainant. The accused also receives a copy of this. The director is sent the decision of the committee. If the complaint concerns the director, the Supervisory Board is sent the decision by the committee.

#### **Article 10 Appeal**

A complaint is resolved if the complainant is satisfied with the handling. If the complainant is not satisfied, appeal can be made to the executive director, who checks whether the complaints procedure has been followed properly and takes action if that was not the case. If the complainant is dissatisfied with the Executive Director's decision, the Complaints Coordinator may refer the complainant to the appropriate body to pursue the complaint.

#### **Article 11 Registration of findings in the Complaints Register**

All findings in connection with complaints are filed in the Complaints Register. This register is securely managed by the Complaints Coordinator of Rutgers office in Utrecht. Once a year, the Management Team (MT) assesses all anonymous complaints and the reasons involved, including complaints made to the country offices. The MT subsequently makes recommendations for improvement.

1. Rutgers will observe the highest possible confidentiality with regard to the identity of the complainant and the person who provides information during the complaint investigation and the handling of the complaint.
2. The written complaint will be stored anonymously on the network. The folder where the complaints are stored can only be viewed by the Complaints Coordinator.
3. Anyone who, within the framework of these rules, learns in any way of information of which he/she knows or can reasonably suspect the confidential nature, is obliged to keep it confidential. This does not apply to the extent that any statutory provision requires disclosure.
4. Once the complaint has been dealt with, files relating to the complaint will be kept by the Complaints Coordinator and destroyed after two years.
5. Details of the complaint will not be included in the personnel file of an employee (plaintiff/accused), unless this is desired by the employee himself.
6. In the annual report of its activities, the Complaints Committee does not mention the names of the complainants.
7. Rutgers will not knowingly retaliate or take any other action that may harm the complainant or informant, or refrain from interfering with their employment contract or livelihood by not doing so:
  - a. Report a complaint in accordance with this policy to law enforcement officials, government officials or agencies or persons in a managerial relationship with the complainant.
  - b. Provide information regarding the complaint to law enforcement officials, government officials, or officers of the complainant.
  - c. Otherwise, assist in initiating such action.
8. Those who threaten to retaliate against someone who wishes to raise a suspicion of a complaint will be subject to disciplinary action with the ultimate consequence of termination of employment.
9. Any person who intentionally or with malicious intent provides false information will be subject to disciplinary action that will result in termination of employment.

#### **Retention rights of complaints and documents**

All complaints will as far as possible remain confidential. Moreover, all written declarations together with results of inquiries will be filed at Rutgers in accordance with the Personal Data Protection Policy.

#### **Contact address**

Rutgers' Complaints Coordinator  
Postbus 9022  
3506 GA Utrecht  
The Netherlands  
t +31 (0)30 2313431  
Email: [complaintscommission@rutgers.nl](mailto:complaintscommission@rutgers.nl)  
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