



POLICY ON GRIEVANCE REDRESSAL

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CUSTOMER RELATIONS DEPARTMENT
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1 Introduction

In the present scenario of competitive banking, excellence in customer service is the most important tool for sustained business growth. Customer complaints are part of the business life of any corporate entity. This is more so for banks because banks are service organizations. As a service organization, customer service and customer satisfaction should be the prime concern of any bank. The bank believes that providing prompt and efficient service is essential not only, to attract new customers, but also for customer retention.

A complaint is an expression of dissatisfaction with a product or service, either orally or in writing, from a customer. A customer may have a genuine cause for complaint, although some complaints may be made as a result of a misunderstanding or an unreasonable expectation of a product or service. How a complaint is handled will affect the overall level of customer satisfaction. Complaints can also be used as feedback mechanism for bringing about improvement in services. Grievance Redressal Policy has been formulated in line with guidelines of the regulators on customer service. It is used as feedback mechanism for bringing about improvement in services.

The customer complaint arises due to:

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

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. South Indian Bank's Grievance Redressal Policy has been formulated in line with guidelines of the regulators on Customer Service. The policy broadly strives to ensure that:

- a) The customer is having full right to register his complaint if he is not satisfied with the services provided by the bank.
- b) Customer can give complaint in writing, orally or over telephone, or by e-mails etc.
- c) Customers to be treated fairly and with courtesy and on time at all times
- d) Customers are fully informed of avenues to escalate their complaints/grievances within the organization and their rights to alternative remedy like Banking Ombudsman, if they are not fully satisfied with the response of the bank to their complaints.
- e) Bank will treat all complaints efficiently and fairly as they can damage the bank's reputation and business if handled otherwise.
- f) The bank employees must work in good faith and without prejudice to the interests of the customer.

In order to make bank's redressal mechanism more meaningful and effective, a structured system needs to be built up. Such system would ensure that the redressal sought is just and fair and is permissible within the given frame-work of rules and regulation. The policy document would be made available at all branches and bank's website. The employees concerned should be made aware about the Complaint handling process.

2 Applicability

This policy is applicable to all branches, offices, Head Office Departments and its personnel involved in functioning of operations of the Bank including Banking Correspondents and other outsourced individuals / firms employed for and on behalf of the bank.

3 Objective

South Indian Bank seeks to be the preferred financial solutions provider excelling in customer delivery through insight, empowered employees and smart use of technology. The policy on Customer Grievance Redressal aims to reiterate the Bank's core values viz. Customer Centricity, Ethics, Transparency, Teamwork and Ownership by laying down a structured system which would ensure availability of multiple channels within the Bank for customer grievance redressal. The policy would also ensure that redressal would be fair, consistent and in accordance with the extant rules & regulations.

4 Salient Features of the Policy

- (a) All complaints will be registered in central Complaint Redressal Management system (CRM) & Information Bank of the Bank. Complaints will be assigned a unique reference number.
- (b) All complaints shall be monitored and marked as closed only after giving reply/resolution to the customer grievance.
- (c) All complaints pertaining to services rendered by Branches would be responded by the concerned Branch Manager at the first level. Escalated complaints and unresolved complaints would be handled by the Regional Offices of the Bank.
- (d) Complaints received from Regulators will be resolved by Nodal Officer at Regional Office or at Head Office accordingly. The timelines as mandated by respective regulator will be adhered to, as far as possible.
- (e) Resolution of complaints would be, wherever applicable, in accordance with Bank's Compensation Policy / Customer Protection Policy.
- (f) The Grievance Redressal Policy is accessible to all and it ensures that information is readily available on the modalities of making and resolving complaints. This policy is available on the website and also at Branches.
- (g) There will be no charge for lodging a complaint. The Grievance Redressal policy will be made available free of charge upon request.
- (h) Achieve compliance with the procedure on Grievance Redressal as outlined in the Code of Commitment to Individual Customers set out by the Banking Codes and Standards Board of India (BCSBI) as well as Master Circular on Customer Service dated 1st July 2015.
- (i) Complainant and / or Complaint details will be shared with other organizations/regulatory authorities only if in accordance with the laws of the country and the customer will be kept apprised about the same. Sharing of information otherwise will only be done with a written consent of the customer except in the case of operation of regulatory/statutory provisions to disclose / share the same in terms of the regulator/law in force. The same will be done only in circumstances where the input of an external agency / organization is necessary for resolving the complaint.
- (j) Improve processes and systems towards better customer experience by taking cognizance of customer feedback and Complaints.

5 Dealing with Complaints and Improving Customer Relations

5.1 Complaints / Suggestions box: Complaints/suggestions box is provided at each Branch of the bank. Further, at every Branch of the bank a notice requesting the customers to meet the Branch Manager may be displayed regarding grievances, if the grievances remain un-redressed.

5.2 Complaint Book / Register: Bank shall ensure that the complaint registers are kept at prominent place in the branches which would make it possible for the customers to enter their complaints. The complaints received by the branches shall be entered in:

- a) CRM [General Complaints]
- b) Information bank [ATM, POS, Online , Unauthorized transactions]

5.3 Complaint Form: Further, a complaint form, along with the name of the Nodal Officer for complaint redressal, shall be provided in the homepage itself (www.southindianbank.com -> **Help Desk->Complaint Registration**) to facilitate complaint submission by customers.

The complaint form shall also indicate that the first point for redressal of complaints is the bank itself and that complainants may approach the Banking Ombudsman only if the complaint is not resolved at the bank level after a month. Similar information shall be displayed in the boards put up in all the bank branches to indicate the name and address of respective the Banking Ombudsman. In addition, the name, address and telephone numbers of the Controlling Authority of the bank to whom complaints can be addressed will also be displayed prominently.

5.4 Analysis and Disclosure of complaints - Disclosure of complaints / unimplemented awards of Banking Ombudsmen along with Financial Results:

As per the recommendation of the Committee on Procedures and Performance Audit on Public Services (CPPAPS), bank shall place a statement before their Boards analyzing the complaints received. Banks shall place a statement of complaints before their Boards / Customer Service Committees along with an analysis of the complaints received. The complaints should be analyzed:

- (i) to identify customer service areas in which the complaints are frequently received;
- (ii) to identify frequent sources of complaint;
- (iii) to identify systemic deficiencies; and
- (iv) For initiating appropriate action to make the grievance redressal mechanism more effective.
- (v) further, the following brief details shall be disclosed along with the financial results:

Customer Complaints

- 1) No. of complaints pending at the beginning of the year
- 2) No. of complaints received during the year
- 3) No. of complaints redressed during the year
- 4) No. of complaints pending at the end of the year

Awards passed by the Banking Ombudsman

- 1) No. of unimplemented Awards at the beginning of the year
- 2) No. of Awards passed by the Banking Ombudsmen during the year
- 3) No. of Awards implemented during the year
- 4) No. of unimplemented Awards at the end of the year

Further, a detailed statement of complaints and its analysis shall be displayed on the web-site for information of the general public at the end of each financial year. All complaints pertaining to ATM cards issued by the Bank shall also be included in the disclosures.

6 Registration of Complaints by Customers

The following channels are available for registration of complaints -

- 6.1 **Complaints in Person:** Customers may use complaint cum suggestion box kept at branch for any Complaint / Feedback / Suggestions for improvement in our products and services or register their complaints directly with any branch official.
- 6.2 **Complaints by Letter:** The Customers can register their Complaints / Feedback / Suggestions in writing addressed to Branch, Controlling Offices or Head Office.
- 6.3 **Complaints over Telephone:** Customers can register their complaints through phone in the numbers published in the website / SIB Mirror Plus. **Toll Free Centre:** Customers can also lodge the complaints through the Bank's toll free numbers at **1800-102-9408 (Airtel) / 1800-425-1809 (BSNL) / 91 484 2388555 (NRI)**.
- 6.4 **Complaints through mail / e-mail:** Customer can also submit complaint by post or through e-mail. Complaints received by e-mail shall be acknowledged by e-mail. E-mail addresses of the Nodal Officers will be provided at the Branches. Dedicated Email id is: **customercare@sib.co.in**
- 6.5 **Complaints through website:** Customers can submit their complaints online by selecting option - '**Complaint Registration**' on home page of Bank's website www.southindianbank.com as well as through other social media networking sites.
- 6.6 **Complaints through SIB Mirror Plus:** Customers can submit their complaints (internet & mobile banking related) online using the mobile application – **SIB Mirror Plus-> Request Services-> Grievance** and the status of the complaints can be tracked using the "**View Grievance Status**".

To facilitate faster and complete resolution of complaints, the complaint letter / email should contain:

- (i) Complainant's name, address and contact details (e-mail id, phone / mobile numbers etc.)
- (ii) Relationship information such as Customer ID/ Account number / Debit / Credit Card number/ Application number.
- (iii) Reference number of any previous complaint / request lodged, if any.
- (iv) Details and nature of the complaint.
- (v) Name of branch / ATM or any other customer touch point accessed by the customer, if any, prior to lodgment of the complaint.
- (vi) Copies of supporting documents, wherever applicable.

7. Internal Machinery to handle Customer complaints/ grievances

7.1 Branch Level Customer Service Committee (BLCSC)

The bank recognizes that customer's Expectation / Requirement / Grievances can be better appreciated through personal interaction with customers by bank's staff. Structured customer meets / Branch Level Customer Service Committee meeting, say once in a month will give a message to

the customers that the bank cares for them and values their Feedback / Suggestions for improvement in customer service.

For this purpose, all branches shall observe “**Customer Day**” on 15th of every month (or next working day, if it happens to be a holiday). Bank has also constituted customer service committees at Regional level to ensure effective supervision of timely redressal of customer complaints. Many of the complaints arise on account of lack of awareness among customers about bank services and such interactions will help the customers appreciate banking services better. As for the bank the feedback from customers would be valuable input for revising its product and improving the standard of services to meet customer requirements.

7.2 Customer Service Committee of the Board (CSC)

This subcommittee of the Board is responsible to oversee the implementation of service enhancement initiatives across the Bank towards improved customer experience. Bank has constituted a Customer Service Committee of the Board with experts and representatives of customers as invitees. CSC assesses the service governance structure and effect ongoing improvements in the quality of service provided by the Bank. Customers are also invited to share their experience and feedback with the Committee. This sub-committee of the Board would be responsible for formulation of a Comprehensive Deposit Policy incorporating the issues such as the treatment of death of a depositor for operations of his account, the product approval process and the annual survey of depositor satisfaction and the triennial audit of such services. The Committee would also examine any other issues having a bearing on the quality of customer service rendered. This Committee would also review the functioning of Standing Committee on Customer Service.

7.3 Standing Committee on Customer Service

The Standing Committee on Customer Service will be chaired by the Managing Director / Executive Vice President of the bank. Besides senior executives of the bank, the committee would also have non-official as member. The committee would have the following functions.

- a) Evaluate feed-back on quality of customer service received from various quarters. The committee would also review comments/feed-back on customer service and implementation of commitments in the Code of Bank’s Commitments to Customers received from BCSBI.
- b) 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 feed-back from zonal / regional managers/ functional heads.
- c) The committee also would consider unresolved complaints / grievances referred to it by functional heads responsible for redressal and offer their advice.
- d) The committee would submit report on its performance to the customer service committee of the board at quarterly intervals.

7.4 Nodal Officer and other designated officials to handle complaints and grievances

Bank has appointed a Principal Nodal Officer of the rank of **Chief General Manager**, who will be responsible for the implementation of customer service and complaint handling for the entire bank. The bank may also appoint Nodal Officer/ Customer Relation Officer at Zonal/ Regional offices to handle complaint grievances in respect of branches falling under their control. The name and contact details of nodal officers have been displayed on the branch notice boards.

7.5 Internal Ombudsman

1. Reserve Bank of India (RBI) had, advised banks to appoint Internal Ombudsman (IO) as an independent authority to review complaints that were partially or wholly rejected by the respective banks. The Internal Ombudsman mechanism was set up with a view to strengthen the internal grievance redressal system of banks and to ensure that the complaints of the customers are redressed at the level of the bank itself by an authority placed at the highest level of bank's grievance redressal mechanism so as to minimize the need for the customers to approach other forum for redressal. There will be a system of auto escalation of customer complaints to Internal Ombudsman, which are in the nature of deficiency in service on the part of the bank, (those grounds listed in Clause 8 of the Banking Ombudsman Scheme, 2006)[As amended -01.07.2017] that are partly or wholly rejected by the Bank's Internal Grievance Redressal System. The bank shall also furnish in writing along with the reply, that the complaint has been inspected by Bank's Internal Ombudsman and has his concurrence for rejection. And that, if the customer is not satisfied by the resolution provided by Bank, he/she may approach the Banking Ombudsman.

7.6 Mandatory display requirements

It is mandatory for the bank to prominently display the following

At Branch:

- a) The appropriate arrangement for receiving complaints and suggestions.
- b) The name address and contact details of the concerned Nodal Officer appointed under the Banking Ombudsman Scheme.
- c) The Contact details of Banking Ombudsman of the area
- d) Code of Bank's commitments to customers / Fair Practice code

In Website:

- a) The names and other details of the officials at the Head Office / Regional Offices who can be contacted for redressal of complaints including the names of the Nodal Officers / Principal Nodal Officer.
- b) The names and other details of the Managing Director & CEO and also Line Functioning Heads for various operations to enable the customers to approach them in case of need, if necessary.
- c) Code of Bank's commitments to customers / Fair Practice code

8 Resolution of Grievances

- 8.1 If the complaint is in respect of a particular branch, customers may contact the Branch Manager directly or by phone, e-mail or any other means, to get their grievance redressed. (For mail-id, phone number, name of the Branch Manager & Regional Office, customers can visit the link: <http://southindianbank.com/branch/branchlist.aspx>). BM shall strive to resolve the complaint within the next working day at the branch level itself. If the complaint is not redressed on the same day at the branch level itself, a complaint may be lodged. In order to ensure an effective complaint redressal mechanism, the bank has put in place a four tier complaint redressal system.

- 8.2 Tier 1 - Complaint Registration with Regional Head: Customers desirous of registering a

complaint against the branch are requested to lodge the complaint with the respective Regional Head. The complainant will receive an auto acknowledgement instantaneously with a reference number on receipt of the complaint and your complaint will be redressed within 10 working days, from the date of receipt of the complaint.

8.3 Tier 2 – Escalation of Complaint to the Deputy General Manager, Customer Relations Dept. (CRD) at HO: In cases where the customer is not satisfied with the solution got from the Regional Head or did not get any response within 10 working days after lodging the complaint, complaint will be auto escalated to the Deputy General Manager, Customer Relations Department for redressal. The complaint will be redressed within 10 working days, from the date of receipt of the complaint.

8.4 Tier 3- Escalation of Complaint to Principal Nodal Officer: In cases where the customer not satisfied with the solution got from DGM (CRD) or did not get any response within 10 working days after escalating the complaint to Deputy General Manager, Customer Relations Department at HO, complaint will be auto escalated to the Principal Nodal Officer of the Bank.

8.5 Tier 4 – Escalation of complaint to Internal Ombudsman: The Complaint which were not fully or partly redressed by the bank, shall be auto escalated to Internal Ombudsman appointed by the bank provided the ground of the complaint is covered under Ombudsman Scheme, 2006 [As amended - 01.07.2017].

9. Complaints against Business Facilitators / Business Correspondents

Customer complaints arising out of the acts of omission and commission of its duly appointed Business Facilitators / Business Correspondents will also get redressed as per this grievance redressal policy.

10. Disclosure Norms

Further, Bank shall disclose the brief details regarding the number of complaints along with the financial results. This statement shall include all the complaints received at the Head Office / Regional Office level as also the complaints received at the branch level. If the customer complaints are redressed within next working day, bank need not include the same in the statement of complaints. All employees will be made aware about the complaint handling process and the incentive available to the Bank, if the complaints are redressed within the next working day.

Branches, Regional Offices and HO Depts. shall enter the particulars of complaints received and the details of action taken in the CRM module. Complaints related to failed ATM transactions are maintained separately to ensure prompt redressal of complaints within the specified time limit prescribed from time to time. The details of action taken on complaints lodged through the Bank's website shall be noted in the web based grievance redressal module itself. Based on the above centralized complaint redressal system, Bank can get the action taken report on complaints received at various levels at any point of time. All complaints will be replied to within a maximum period of 30 days. Any complaint that is to be wholly / partly rejected will be forwarded through competent authority to Bank's Internal Ombudsman to obtain his/her concurrence. Replies to these complaints will specifically state the same as already mentioned in Clause 7.5

11 Banking Ombudsman

In the unlikely event of a customer not receiving a response within one month from the date of lodgment of the initial complaint, or in case of dissatisfaction with the response given by the Bank, he/she may approach the Banking Ombudsman. The details of the Banking Ombudsman are available on the Bank's website (<http://www.southindianbank.com>) under disclosures and on website of RBI and also at the branch premises on the Comprehensive Notice Board.

The Bank has also appointed Regional Nodal Officers, as mandated by the RBI under the Banking Ombudsman Scheme, 2006 [As amended -01.07.2017]. Details of Regional Nodal Officers are available on the Bank's website and are also prominently displayed in the branches. The Code of Bank's Commitment to Customers information is available on the Bank's website under disclosures.

12 Sensitizing operating staff on handling complaints

Staff should be properly trained for handling complaints. We are dealing with people and hence difference of opinion and areas of friction can arise. With an open mind and a smile on the face we should be able to win the customer's confidence. Imparting soft skills required for handling irate agitated customers, will be an integral part of the training programs. It would be the responsibility of the Nodal Officer to ensure that internal machinery for handling complaints/grievances operates smoothly and efficiently at all levels. He should give feedback on training needs of staff at various levels to the Human Resources Department.

13 Record Keeping & Data Base

The record of complaints would be maintained for a minimum period of ten years from the date of their resolution. Backup copies of the software will be made as per the latest Backup Policy under the Information Security Policy.

14 Review of Policy

This policy will be reviewed at annual intervals. The policy would be available on Bank's website and at all branches (on request). All employees of the Banks have been made aware of this policy. For detailed information on compensation to the customer for any financial loss he/she might incur due to deficiency in service on the part of the bank or any act of omission or commission directly attributable to the bank refer Compensation Policy and Customer Protection Policy.