Grievance Redressal Policy for the FY 2023-24

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1. Policy Overview

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 as every business has to deal with situations in which things go wrong from a customer's point of view. This is more so for Banks being service organizations. As a service organization, imparting good customer service and enhancing level of customer satisfaction is the prime concern of any bank. Providing prompt and efficient service is essential not only to attract new customers, but also to retain existing ones. Customer dissatisfaction would spoil bank's name and image which will result in loss in business.

The Bank's policy on grievance redressal follows the under noted principles.

a) Customers be always treated fairly.
b) Complaints raised by customers are dealt with courtesy and on time.
c) Grievances of pensioners and senior citizens are dealt on priority.
d) Customers are 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.
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 would work in good faith and without prejudice to the interests of the customer.

The policy will be effective from 01.04.2023 and valid up to 31.03.2024.

2. Policy Details

2.1. Background:

To make Bank's Grievance Redressal Mechanism more meaningful and effective, a structured system has been built up towards such an end. This system would ensure that the redressal sought is just and fair and is permissible within the given framework of rules and regulation.

The Policy is based on the guiding principle enlisted in the RBI "Master Circular on Customer Service in Banks" circulated vide RBI/2015-16/59/DBR No. Leg. BC.21/09.07.006/2015-16 dated 1st July 2015.

2.2. Objective:

To establish a robust system which will streamline the resolution of Customer Grievances in the shortest possible time and adhere to various Statutory/Regulatory Guidelines on the subject matter.

2.3. Scope and Applicability:

The Grievance Redressal Policy shall cover the Grievance Redressal function of all the Offices of the Bank.

2.4. Policy Contents:

The Grievance Redressal Policy, in terms of the RBI Master Circular on Customer Service in Banks circulated vide RBI letter dated 01st July, 2015, includes the following aspects:

2.4.1. Definition of Grievance:

A Grievance is an expression of dissatisfaction made to an organization, related to its products, or services, or the complaints' handling process itself, where a response or resolution is explicitly or implicitly expected.

2.4.2. Major reasons for Customer Complaints:

2.4.2.1. Attitudinal/Behavioural aspects in dealing with Customers;

2.4.2.2. Operational aspects- Inadequacy of the working/operations or gaps in standards of services expected and actual services rendered.

2.4.2.3. Technology Related

2.4.3. Right to Grievance Redress:

The customer has the right to register his Grievance if he is not satisfied with the services provided by the Bank. A customer may lodge Grievance either in writing or through electronic means if he is not satisfied with the services provided by the Bank. All complaints will be recorded by the Bank in a database. The database, along with the acknowledgement letter and other correspondence will be preserved at least for 3 years for future reference. However, no action will be taken on anonymous/ pseudonymous complaints and the same will be filed as per guidelines issued by Central Vigilance Commission.

There are four main ways to raise Grievance – in person, by telephone, by mail/post or by e-mail/internet. Complaints received through all these channels must be handled efficiently and swiftly. If the complaints are not resolved within 30 days or in case the customer is not satisfied with the service or redressal provided by the bank, he can also approach the RBI Ombudsman as per the Integrated Ombudsman Scheme, 2021 for redressal. The contact details of the RBI Ombudsman are available on website and displayed at each Branch. The complainant can also resort to other legal avenues available for grievance redressal.

2.4.4. Resolution of Grievances:

2.4.4.1. Grievances related to attitudinal aspects:

a) Such complaints shall be handled courteously, sympathetically and above all swiftly.
b) Misbehaviour/rude behaviour with customers shall be treated at Zero Tolerance Level and immediate action be taken. Bank, under no circumstances shall tolerate misbehaviour of any degree by our staff members.
c) To keep the complaints related to misbehaviour/rude behaviour at a Zero-Tolerance Level, stern action/ disciplinary action against the erring officials would be initiated by the respective Disciplinary Authority.
d) All such complaints shall be closed after analysis of CCTV Footage/ Investigation.

2.4.4.2. Grievances relating to transactions/operations:

Primarily, the Branch is responsible for the resolution of complaints/ Grievances in this category. Branch would be responsible for ensuring rectification of entry / transaction or satisfaction of customers. It is the foremost duty of the branch to see that the Grievance is resolved to the customer's satisfaction and if he/ she is not satisfied, then to provide him/ her with alternate avenues to escalate the issue. In case, it is not getting resolved at branch level, they can refer the case to Circle Office for guidance/resolution. Similarly, if Circle office finds that they are not able to solve the problem, such cases may be referred to Zonal Office, who can further forward the same to Principal Nodal Officer at Head Office.

2.4.4.3. Grievances related to Digital Transactions:

Considering customers' expectations and lack of familiarity with alternate delivery channels (ATMs, Internet Banking, Credit Cards and Mobile Banking), the Bank has considered exclusive mechanism for redressal of grievances arising from use of these channels.

2.4.5. <u>Grievances Redressal Escalation Matrix:</u>

Customers may primarily approach the Hall In-charge / Branch Manager in case of any grievance. The customer may also approach CCEOs (Chief Customer Executive Officer) of concerned Circle Office / Zonal Office/ PNO and/ or escalate the issue to Customer Care Centre, HO, Gurugram through email at care@pnb.co.in or by call at following numbers:

a) 1800 103 2222 (Toll Free)
b) 1800 180 2222 (Toll Free)
c) 0120 – 249 0000 (Paid No)

The contact details are available on Comprehensive Notice Board in branches and on Bank's website www.pnbindia.in.

"The customers of overseas branches who are not satisfied with the response of Chief Executive, PNB, BO: DIFC, Dubai in respect of their complaints/grievances, may escalate their issues to the General Manager, International Banking Division, Head Office: Sector 10, Dwarka, New Delhi or at email address: ibd@pnb.co.in." Contact detail of PNB's group entities, viz., PNBGILTS and PNB Housing Finance Ltd. shall also be provided at Bank's website for resolution of customer grievances relating to these entities.

2.4.6. <u>Internal Ombudsman:</u>

On the recommendations of the Damodaran Committee, Bank has appointed Chief Customer Service Officer (CCSO) to act as Internal Ombudsman (IO) for ensuring that the minimum number of cases gets escalated to the Banking Ombudsman (BO).

Prime objective of Internal Ombudsman Scheme is to ensure that customer's confidence in Internal Grievance Redressal Mechanism is strengthened. The Bank will internally escalate all cases to the Internal Ombudsman (IO) through Principal Nodal Officer (PNO) for a final decision at the earliest but not later than two weeks of receipt of Grievances, in cases where either the Grievance

is rejected or only partial relief is provided to the complainant. The timely escalation to the IO shall ensure that the final decision along with the views of IO can be conveyed to the complainant within a period of 30 days, from the receipt of Grievance.

2.4.7. <u>Time frame for resolution of Customer Grievances:</u>

2.4.7.1. Complaints are to be seen in the right perspective because these indirectly reveal a weak spot in the working of the bank. Complaints received would be analysed from all possible angles. Bank will endeavour to send an acknowledgement/response within three working days from date of receipt of complaint.

2.4.7.2. Turnaround Time (TAT)

Bank will endeavor to redress complaints within a maximum period of 15 working days. Further, in case of Complaints requiring some time for examination of issues involved/ detailed investigations; final response or explanation for further time required, will be sent by the Bank within 30 days of receipt of complaint. In the event of complaints involving fraud, redressal will be as per FRMD Policy/ RBI guidelines.

However, specific TAT as stipulated by NPCI, RBI, other regulatory authorities and CPGRAM /INGRAM shall be adhered to.

2.4.7.3. The guidelines with differentiated TAT for various categories of Customer Grievances have been outlined in the Operational Guidelines of this Policy.

2.4.8. <u>Review Mechanism:</u>

2.4.8.1. Customer Service Committee of the Board:

This sub-committee of the Board chaired by the Chairman/ Managing Director & CEO shall periodically review major areas of customer grievances and measures taken to improve customer service. The Committee would also examine all issues that have a bearing on the quality of customer service provided to individual depositors and borrowers. This Committee would also review the functioning of Standing Committee on Customer Service. Further, detail of complaints with its analysis is placed before Customer Service Committee of the Board on quarterly basis.

2.4.8.2. Standing Committee on Customer Service:

The Standing Committee on Customer Service will be chaired by the Executive Director (in-charge of Customer Care Centre, HO) of the Bank. The other members of the Committee would consist of Heads of ITD, DBTD, RAM&FI, IBD, LKMC, HRD, GSAD, GBMD and Compliance. Besides this, the Committee will also have representatives/customers (preferably a Senior Citizen/ Pensioner/Next-Gen Customer), as its guest invitees.

The Quorum of the Committee would be Executive Director (in-charge of Customer Care Centre, HO), One of the Guest Invitees, either of CGM (Operations) / GM (Customer Care Centre) / DGM (Customer Care Centre). The Committee would meet once every quarter. The committee would have the following functions:

2.4.8.2.1 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 Code of Bank's Commitments to Customers received from BCSBI.

2.4.8.2.2 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 circle heads/ functional heads.

2.4.8.2.3 The committee would also consider unresolved complaints/grievances referred to it by functional heads responsible for redressal and offer their advice.

2.4.8.2.4 The committee would submit report on its performance to the Customer Service Committee of the Board at quarterly interval.

2.4.8.3. Managing Director & CEO / Executive Directors (MD&CEO/ EDs)

Several grievances are addressed by customer directly to the Managing Director & CEO/ Executive Directors. Where the issues raised are of serious nature, the Managing Director & CEO/ EDs shall call for a report on the causes that led to the grievance, action taken and final resolution given to the customer.

2.4.8.4. Nodal Officer and other designated officials to handle complaints and grievances:

2.4.8.4.1 Nodal Officer: Bank would appoint a Principal Nodal Officer in the rank of General Manager at Head Office level who will be responsible for the implementation and monitoring of grievances redressal for customers in the bank.

2.4.8.4.2 Aggrieved customers can write directly to the Principal Nodal Officer regarding their grievances at the following address :

The Principal Nodal Officer,
Punjab National Bank,
Customer Care Centre,
Sector 32, Gurugram,
Haryana – 122 001.
Email: care@pnb.co.in

2.4.8.4.3 Likewise, at Zonal Offices/ Circle offices, the ZMs/ CHs shall nominate persons (not below the rank of Deputy General Manager at ZOs and Chief Manager at COs) as CCEOs, who shall be responsible for the implementation and monitoring of Grievance Redressal of Customers for the offices under their administrative control.

2.4.8.4.4 Grievance Redressal Cell, under a reasonably senior and experienced officer, duly supported by a team of 2-3 dedicated officers, be set up at Zonal Offices/ Circle Offices to handle complaints of customers in a satisfactory manner.

2.4.8.4.5 The names, addresses, e-mail and contact numbers of CCEOs shall be made available at the branches and on the Bank's website.

2.4.8.5. Root Cause Analysis(RCA)

The Bank shall undertake Root Cause Analysis (RCA) of Customer Grievances to identify the underlying causes and thereby take necessary corrective measures to bring process/systemic improvement, with the objective to minimize the recurrence of Grievances of similar nature. The detailed guidelines for this have been outlined in the Operational Guidelines.

2.4.9. Mandatory display requirements

It is mandatory for the Bank to provide:

a. Appropriate arrangement for receiving complaints and suggestions.
b. The name, address and contact number of Principal Nodal Officer(s)/ Circle Heads / Nodal Officer(s) /CCEOs.
c. Contact details of Banking Ombudsman of the area.
d. Code of Bank's commitments to customers/Fair Practice code.
e. Display of CNB (Comprehensive Notice Board) in Branches.
f. Magnifying Glass for visually impaired persons.

2.4.10. Interaction with customers

The Bank recognizes that customers' expectations/requirements/ grievances can be better responded through personal interaction with customers by Bank staff. Many of the complaints arise on account of lack of awareness among customers about Bank's services and such interactions will help the customers appreciate banking services better. In view of this, following arrangements have been made:

2.4.10.1. Customer Service Committees

Customer Service Committees shall be set up in all Circle offices /Branches to look into the quality of customer service rendered and critically examine the feedback/suggestions for improvement in customer service. These committees shall meet once in a month where staff and invited customers shall interact freely on service-related issues to discuss the 'monthly theme' to be deliberated upon by the Branch/ Office. The theme will be decided at Customer Care Centre, Head Office and conveyed well in advance to the field functionaries.

Two nominated non-official members are to be invited in the Circle Level Customer Service Committee Meeting on quarterly basis.

A pensioner or in the absence of a pensioner, a senior citizen should invariably be included in the Customer Service Committee by the Branches and Circle Offices.

Representation of majority Employees Union/Association in the Circle Level Customer Service Committee be also ensured.

2.4.10.2. Customer Relation Programmes

Customer Relation Programmes are to be conducted twice a year at Circle Office level, wherein customers from different segments are to be invited and their grievances / suggestions are to be looked into.

2.4.10.3. Customers' Day:

Customers' Day is extended at the organisation structure level and be conducted on 10th of every month or next working Day if 10th is a holiday.

Office bearers at respective locations will meet customers and take necessary action for resolution of genuine customer grievance between 3.00 PM to 5.00 PM as per following table:-

SN	Level	Office Bearer *
1	Branch	Branch Head
2	Circle Office	Circle Head
3	Zonal Office	Zonal Manager
4	Head Office	PNO (GM, CCC : HO)

*In case BH / CH / ZM / PNO are away from office due to official work / leave, then second person of the respective office will attend the customer.

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Appendix

A. List of Acronyms and Definitions

1. KIOSK: A small stand -alone device that displaying information or providing services
2. MOF: Ministry of Finance
3. PMO: Prime Minister Office
4. HRMS: Human Resource Management System
5. BCSBI: Banking Codes & Standards Board of India
6. CCEOs: Chief Customer Executive Officers

B. List of references including related policies/forms, RBI circulars, etc.

The Policy is based on the guiding principle enlisted in the RBI "Master Circular on Customer Service in Banks" circulated vide RBI/2015-16/59/DBR No. Leg. BC.21/09.07.006/2015-16 dated 1st July 2015.

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