

Purple Ruler Therapy Complaints Policy

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1. Purpose

This policy outlines the procedures for handling complaints related to counselling and therapy services provided by Purple Ruler. We are committed to adhering to the BACP Ethical Framework and ensuring all complaints are addressed promptly, fairly, and confidentially.

Purple Ruler welcomes feedback from clients, schools, parents/guardians, and staff to improve our services. Complaints may relate to:

- Ethical concerns, safeguarding issues, or professional misconduct
- Breaches of confidentiality or data protection
- Dissatisfaction with therapy services, including session quality

2. Confidentiality & Data Protection

- Complaints will be treated with strict confidentiality and shared only with those directly involved.
- GDPR Compliance: Complaint records will be securely stored and retained for 5 years before deletion unless legally required.
- Information may only be shared without consent if there is a safeguarding risk, legal obligation, or professional misconduct issue requiring escalation.

3. How We Manage Complaints

Stage 1: Informal Complaint (Resolution within 5 Working Days)

- All complaints should be directed to the Client Care Manager Shahaam Arendse at shahaam.a@purpleruler.com or support@purpleruler.com
- The Client Care Manager will acknowledge the complaint via writing and begin the investigation process.
- The investigation may involve looking through written records, conversations, email chains, meeting transcripts and speaking with the internal team. The Client Care Manager may also ask the complainant to provide any evidence they have to support their claim.
- The Client Care Manager will provide a resolution via writing.

Stage 2: Formal Complaint (Response within 15 Working Days)

If an informal resolution is not possible or it is not satisfactory, the complainant may request for the Client Care Manager to begin a formal complaint process and submit this to the HR Director Bella Ma. The complainant will be copied in the submission.

Investigation Process:

1. The HR Director will acknowledge the complaint within 3 working days.
2. An internal investigation will be conducted within 10 working days lead by the HR Director. During the investigation, this may include speaking with the complainant directly either via writing, call or virtual meeting, speaking with the internal team, looking through records and documentations or consulting an external consultant. The complainant may be asked to provide further evidence.
3. A final response will be provided within 15 working days via writing, outlining:
 - Whether the complaint is upheld, partially upheld, or not upheld.
 - Actions taken to resolve the issue.
 - Any further recommendations or necessary training for staff involved to mitigate the same issue in the future.
 - Any compensation or refund where possible.

Stage 3: Appeal Process (Independent Review within 20 Working Days)

If dissatisfied, the complainant may appeal within 10 working days by emailing the Managing Director daniel.d@purpleruler.com to be reviewed.

- The Managing Director may arrange for the appeal to be reviewed with an external independent panel, this may include:

- Independent clinical supervisor
- Directors at ADM Computer Services Ltd
- A BACP-accredited external consultant

A final decision will be issued within 20 working days.

Stage 4: External Escalation to BACP or Other Regulatory Bodies

If unresolved, the complainant may escalate the issue externally.

External Complaint Bodies Include:

- British Association for Counselling & Psychotherapy (BACP)
 - Email: professional_conduct@bacp.co.uk
 - Website: www.bacp.co.uk
- Local Authority Safeguarding Board (if applicable)
- Information Commissioner's Office (ICO) (for GDPR/Data Protection concerns)

4. Whistleblowing & Safeguarding Concerns

- Complaints involving serious safeguarding concerns will be handled under Purple Ruler's Safeguarding Policy and escalated to designated safeguarding leads and external safeguarding bodies.
- Employees may report misconduct confidentially via the Whistleblowing Policy.

5. Monitoring, Review, and Continuous Improvement

At Purple Ruler, we are committed to maintaining the highest standards in our counselling and therapy services. To ensure our complaints policy remains effective, we will review and update this policy annually, or sooner if required due to changes in legislation, BACP guidelines, or organisational needs.

5.1 Policy Review Process

- The Client Care Manager will monitor all complaints received and their resolutions.
- An annual review will be conducted by the senior leadership team, assessing:
 - The number, nature, and outcomes of complaints.
 - The timeliness of resolutions.

- Feedback from complainants on how their concerns were handled.
- Recommendations for policy or procedural improvements.
- If trends or recurring issues are identified, further training or procedural adjustments will be implemented.

5.2 Staff Training & Awareness

- All employees involved in handling complaints will receive regular training on this policy and procedures.
- Staff will be required to reaffirm their understanding of this policy on an annual basis.