

Bank of America's Policy on Customer Grievance Redressal

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 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 based on Six Sigma principles should help in identifying shortcomings in product features and service delivery and also will have a structured and periodic reporting of complaints received and remedial action taken to the Local Management Team (LMT). The bank's policy on grievance redressal follows the under noted principles.

- ❖ Customers be treated fairly at all times
- ❖ Complaints raised by customers are dealt with courtesy and on time
- ❖ 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.
- ❖ Bank will treat all complaints efficiently and fairly as they can damage the bank's reputation and business if handled otherwise.
- ❖ Being a Six Sigma organization, the bank would look at every complaint as an opportunity to relook at our processes critically and using Six Sigma tools like DMAIC would put in place permanent fixes to process shortcomings.

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

- 1.1 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.

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

2. Internal Machinery to handle Customer complaints/ grievances

2.1 Standing Committee on Customer Service

This committee 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 and the following customer service related functions:

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- ❖ 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.

- ❖ 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.
- ❖ The committee also would consider the report from the All India CC & E (Complaints, Compliments and Errors) Data Base Administrator and refer the unresolved complaints/grievances to the functional heads/Branch Operations Heads responsible for redressal.
- ❖ The committee would meet on a quarterly basis and submit a report to the Local Management Team (LMT) incorporating the minutes of the meeting and a summary of the RCAs done on the complaints received in the previous quarter.

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

The Nodal officer responsible for ensuring that the policy guidelines formulated, as applicable to the business of the Bank in India, as mandated by BCSBI and RBI is V.Srinivasan, VP and Head Operations of Chennai. He would be also responsible for handling any customer complaints and grievances at Chennai branch.

At the branches (Mumbai, Delhi, Kolkatta and Bangalore), the respective Branch Operations Head would be responsible for handling customer complaints and grievances.

3. Mandatory display requirements

The Bank would, at its branches, provide

- ❖ Appropriate Complaints and Suggestions Box for receiving complaints and suggestions.
- ❖ The name, address and contact number of Nodal Officer(s)/ Branch Operations Head
- ❖ Contact details of Banking Ombudsman of the area
- ❖ Code of bank's commitments to customers/Fair Practice code

4. Resolution of Grievances

The Branch Operations Head at every branch 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 the Country Operations Officer for guidance.

4.1 Time frame

The bank would respond in writing to all written complaints within 3 working days from receipt and would keep the complainant informed on progress on complaint resolution either by phone or writing for cases which can not be resolved within 7 working days of receipt of the complaint.

The bank will take all steps to ensure that complaints are resolved within a maximum period of one month from the date of receipt.

5.1 Interaction with customers

The bank recognizes that customer's expectation/requirement/grievances can be better appreciated through personal interaction with customers by bank's staff. The bank has a separate and independent Global Client Services (GCS) Team

who interact on a daily basis with the clients. The GCS team organizes periodic surveys of the clients with specific questionnaire on our service levels. The feedback from such surveys are passed on to the Operations Team who take appropriate action..

5.2. Complaints Handling and Resolution Process:

The bank has put in place a process for receiving, logging, resolving any customer complaint and also conduct a Root Cause Analysis (RCA) so as to ensure that all the associates are advised of the incidence and that a similar error is not repeated.

A customer can complain about any deficiency in our services to the dedicated Global Client Services (GCS) executive or the Relationship Manager/Treasury Management Sales Officer and also the Operations Manager concerned.

The complaint handling process within operations would be as below:

We have designated a Complaints Data Base Administrator based out of New Delhi and the Head Operations, Chennai as the Complaints Coordinator.

- On receipt of a complaint, it would be logged in to the data base by the administrator who would also send e-mails to the associate concerned with copies to respective Branch Operations Head and the Coordinator
- Action would be taken to resolve the issue to the satisfaction of the client

- A detailed Root Cause Analysis (RCA) would be done by the Dept., Head and the same to be approved by the Branch Operations Head.
- The RCA (done using the DMAIC methodology of Six Sigma discipline) along with complaint closure date would be advised to the Data base Administrator who would host the same.
- On a monthly basis, a report of all the complaints with their Resolution and RCA status would be advised to the Country Operations Officer and the Branch Operations Heads.
- On a quarterly basis, the Customer Service Committee would go over the Complaints and resolutions over the previous quarter and would submit a report to the Local Management Team (LMT)

6. Sensitizing operating staff on handling complaints

The bank provides both class room and on line training on customer service to the associates on a regular basis and the complaints and the RCAs are disseminated to all the associate. The training needs in customer service are assessed and escalated for individual associates by the respective managers. The DMAIC process of finding out the root cause of a complaint and putting in place a permanent fix to the same ensures that the concerned associates at all levels are involved.
