



Appeals and complaints

Procedures

Common process for both complaints and appeals

√ Acknowledgement and Record:

Upon receipt, complaints and appeals are acknowledged to sender within five working days, MD shall liaise concerned person, in order to solve. For complaint and appeal received from a complainant or appellant, which is not VIGOROUS client, the consideration shall be given whether it is appropriate to answer, taking into account potential liability. In such cases, content of the answer is coordinated with client.

This process is subject to requirements for confidentiality.

√ Responsibility for investigation

Personnel who investigate complaints and appeals shall be different from those who carried out the audits and made certification decision, without discrimination against the appellant or complainant.

The Appeals panel shall be comprised of members from the Impartiality Committee or personnel who the Impartiality Committee considers competent to review the appeal

√ Resolution process

The resolution process includes the following steps.

- 1. Investigation, including business impacts and analysis of the situation,**
- 2. Structured response (root cause analysis, correction, corrective action),**
- 3. Implementation of correction and corrective action,**
- 4. Information to the client of findings and actions taken,**
- 5. Monitoring of results: check if the solution is implemented and effective,**
- 6. Record and traceability of documents,**
- 7. Follow up on sustainability of results and of resolution.**

√ Appeal process (VIGOROUS -F09-03)

Appeals are dealt at the level where decision making was done and included in the preparation of VIGOROUS Impartiality meeting.



√ **Complaint process (VIGOROUS -F09-02)**

Complaint can be written (Formal Letter, Email, Website) or verbal (Phone Call, Feedback during sales visit or audit).

Complaints are handled at contracting entity level. An audit may be initiated to proceed with investigation, and the client shall be notified with reasons for the audit.

√ **Timeframe**

An initial response shall be made to the complainant within five working days.

The closure timeframe is within 90 days from the date of receipt of the Appeal /complaint, VIGOROUS will provide the client with liberty to approach the Accreditation Board in case client is not satisfied or the cSomplaint has not been resolved