

OMNIBUS THEATRE

Complaints policy

While it is the aim of The Omnibus Theatre to ensure that no customer has a cause for complaint, mistakes – innocent or otherwise – are a reality. Having a complaints policy and complaints procedure in place not only helps to ensure the efficient and effective handling of complaints but also shows our commitment to providing (and improving) high quality service to our customers. The Omnibus Theatre views complaints as an opportunity to learn and improve for the future, as well as a chance to put things right for the person (or organisation) that has made a complaint.

Our policy is:

- To provide a fair complaints procedure which is clear and easy to use for anyone wishing to make a complaint.
- To publicise the existence of our complaints procedure so that people know how to contact us to make a complaint.
- To make sure everyone at Omnibus Theatre knows what to do if a complaint is received.
- To make sure all complaints are investigated fairly and in a timely way.
- To make sure that complaints are, wherever possible, resolved and that relationships are repaired.
- To gather information which helps us to improve what we do.

Definition of a complaint

A complaint is any expression of dissatisfaction, whether justified or not, about any aspect of the Omnibus Theatre. Complaints may come from any person or organization who has a legitimate interest in the Omnibus Theatre – including clients, stakeholders' audiences, suppliers or the general public. This policy does not cover complaints from staff, who should use the Company's Discipline and Grievance policies. A complaint can be received verbally, by phone, by email or in writing.

Confidentiality

All complaint information will be handled sensitively following The Data Protection Act 2018. Only those directly involved in the case who need to access the information in order to deal with the complaint will be able to obtain relevant confidential information.

Responsibility

Overall responsibility for this policy and its implementation lies with the Artistic Director, or, if necessary, the Trustees.

Review

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This policy is reviewed annually by the Trustees as part of the Annual Policy Review and is updated as required.

How to complain

Our aim is deal with any complaint as soon as possible. Many complaints can be resolved informally. In the first instance contact us and, if you feel able, speak to the member of staff with whom you have had contact or ask to speak to the Artistic Director, who will try to resolve the matter.

If you are not satisfied or do not wish an informal solution, you may pursue a formal complaint. Complaints should be put in writing and sent it to our Artistic Director:

Address: 1 Clapham Common Northside, London, SW4 0QW

Email: marie.mccarthy@omnibus-clapham.org

When you make a complaint, it is helpful if you could include the following information:

- Describe clearly what happened – please include the date, time and location of the incident.
- Tell us why you are making a complaint
- Tell us what you would like us to do.
- Please provide your full name, email address and contact phone number.
- Tell us how you would prefer us to contact you.

If appropriate, please send us any documents that support your complaint.

Registering a Complaint

The person who receives any complaint by whatever means in writing or by phone or in person should complete the complaints register

- Write down the facts of the complaint
- Take the complainant's name, address and telephone number
- Note down the relationship of the complainant to the Company (for example client, member)
- Tell the complainant that we have a complaints procedure
- Tell the complainant what will happen next and how long it will take
- Where appropriate, ask the complainant to send a written account by post or by email so that the complaint is recorded in the complainant's own words.

What happens next

- 1 In many cases, a complaint is best resolved by the person responsible for the issue being complained about. If the complaint has been received by that person, they may be able to resolve it swiftly and should do so if possible and appropriate.

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- 2 The complainant will receive acknowledgement of the complaint within 5 working days and may be contacted to obtain any additional information required to help resolve the complaint. Complaints should be acknowledged by the person handling the matter and the acknowledgement should say who is dealing with the complaint and when the person complaining can expect a reply. A copy of the complaint's procedure should be attached.
- 3 Ideally complainants should receive a definitive reply within two weeks. If this is not possible because, for example, an investigation has not been fully completed, a progress report should be sent with an indication of when a full reply will be given. The complainant will receive a response within 28 working days of its receipt. Whether the complaint is justified or not, the reply to the complainant should describe the action taken to investigate the complaint, the conclusions from the investigation, and any action taken as a result of the complaint.
- 4 If the complainant feels that the problem has not been satisfactorily resolved at Stage One, they can request that the complaint is reviewed at Trustee level. At this stage, the complaint will be passed to the Board of Trustees. The request for Board level review should be acknowledged within a week of receiving it. The acknowledgement should say who will deal with the case and when the complainant can expect a reply. The Chair of the Board may investigate the facts of the case themselves or delegate a suitably senior person to do so. This may involve reviewing the paperwork of the case and speaking with the person who dealt with the complaint at Stage One.
- 5 If the complaint relates to a specific person, they should be informed and given a further opportunity to respond. The person who dealt with the original complaint at Stage One should be kept informed of what is happening. Ideally complainants should receive a definitive reply within four weeks. If this is not possible because, for example, an investigation has not been fully completed, a progress report should be sent with an indication of when a full reply will be given. Whether the complaint is upheld or not, the reply to the complainant should describe the action taken to investigate the complaint, the conclusions from the investigation, and any action taken as a result of the complaint. The decision taken at this stage is final.
- 6 Omnibus Theatre cannot guarantee that complaints made via social media will be seen and responded to within the timescales set out in this policy. We do not have the resources to monitor the wide range of social media channels available. We will aim to acknowledge complaints made via these channels but refer the complainant to an alternative method of communication so that the complaints policy can be followed. If a criminal offence is alleged, then the police will be informed.

Can you take your complaint elsewhere?

We encourage you to contact us directly to resolve your complaint in the first instance, but you can contact the Charity Commission and make a complaint at any point.

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Monitoring and Learning from Complaints are reviewed annually (by the Board and/or the Management Committee) to identify any trends which may indicate a need to take further action.

Omnibus Theatre is a multi-award-winning independent theatre in Clapham, South London. Finalist in the Fringe Theatre of the Year 2020 and 2023 The Stage Awards, Off-West End Award winner 2018 and 2020, and recipient of the Peter Brook/Royal Court Theatre Support Award in 2016. The heart of the organisation's ambitious programme lies in classics re-imagined, modern revivals and new writing. Omnibus Theatre also provides a platform for LGBTQ+ work and aims to give voice to the underrepresented and challenge perceptions. Since opening in 2013 notable in-house productions include *Woyzeck* (2013), *Macbeth* (2014), *Colour* (2015), *Mule* (2016), *Spring Offensive* (2017), *Zeraffa Giraffa* (2017), *Queens of Sheba* (2019), *The Little Prince* (2019), *RICE!* (2021), *The Human Connection* (2021), *The Girl Who Was Very Good At Lying* (2021), *FIJI* (2022), *SAD* (2022), *DRUM* (2022), *The Woman Who Turned into a Tree* (2023) and *Compositor E* (2023).

Omnibus Theatre is led by Artistic Director Marie McCarthy and Executive Director Bridget Kalloushi. Patrons include Dame Judi Dench, Sir Lord Michael Cashman, Paulette Randall MBE and Rikki Beadle-Blair MBE

Omnibus-Clapham is a registered Charity (number 1143709) and a company limited by guarantee (number 07032543).

Ratified: 26/03/25