

DUA Complaints Management Committee

Terms of Reference

As approved by Social Welfare Department in December 2014

Background

The Social Welfare Department (SWD) is working for the wellbeing of the vulnerable women who are the survivors of violence and seeking shelter in Dar-UI-Aman (DUA).

Over the years, the Department has designed and integrated a Protection component. It comprises the respect of Minimum Standards related to residents' rights. It also includes the implementation of Protection guidelines (annexed to the DUA Guidelines) to ensure the prevention, detection, reporting and response to any violations or abuses happening in DUAs.

A Complaints Management Committee (CMC) for each DUA will be notified at district level by the Director General Social Welfare (DG-SW) to manage the complaints of the DUA residents.

Objective of the CMC

The prime objective of the CMC is to handle the complaints of the DUA residents in a transparent manner and to address and resolve grievances according to the defined procedure in DUA Protection Guidelines.

Composition/members of the CMC

- SW District Officer (Convener)
- DUA In-Charge (Secretary)
- 3 representatives of distinct local NGOs/CSOs (Members)¹
- The Chairperson of the Advisory Committee or his/her representative² (Member)
- 1 representative of the DUA residents (Observer)³

Role and responsibilities of the CMC

Complaint mechanism

- Two complaint boxes (with pen & paper) are installed in both residential and administrative areas of DUA
- The boxes are locked and the keys stay with DO-SW;
- The CMC is responsible for monitoring and following up the complaints box procedure as per Protection guidelines;
- The boxes are opened once a month in presence of a quorum of at least 3 people: the IC or the DO-SW, a representative of civil society organizations and the representative from DUA Advisory Committee.
- All complaints/suggestions/requests are read one by one and solutions are decided immediately. The CMC prioritizes the complaints to be dealt at district level or to be forwarded to DG-SW office.

¹ NGO/CSO should work on Violence against Women or Gender Based Violence. Its mandate is 2 years renewable. In consultation with DO-SW, IC will nominate these three representatives from CSO/NGO. DG-SW will then officially notify the CMC.

² This representative should be chosen among the Advisory Committee members that are either volunteer service providers or philanthropists.

³ Every month, all DUA residents elect a representative among themselves (either by consensus or by formal vote). The election process is conducted by IC. If needed, IC can seek support of DUA teacher(s) or any other DUA staff or service providers.

- Before opening of complaints box, follow up of previous complaints has to be ensured by the CMC;
- Minutes of opening session are taken and properly recorded by the convener;
- The both complaint boxes (from residential and administrative areas) should be opened at the same time;
- All complaints/suggestions/requests are recorded by the secretary in the DUA complaints register;
- Signatures of all members of CMC would be taken on the minutes of the meeting
- If any complaint is against a member of the CMC, then that member cannot be engaged in the process of solution of that complaint;
- Information regarding number and type of all complaints is shared with all residents and staff in form of displaying on notice boards in residential and administrative area;
- Follow up of all complaints/suggestions/requests is ensured by the CMC;
- A representative from Directorate Social Welfare may participate in the occasions for opening of the complaints boxes;
- The CMC shares the status of the complaints with Directorate SW on monthly basis.

Effective response to violations or abuses

- Ensure that reported cases are timely addressed as per Protection Guidelines and DUA Rules, Responsibilities and Regulations;
- Maintain the record of complaints and minutes of the meeting on monthly basis;
- Address, record and follow up all reported cases (through complaint boxes and any other written/oral complaints) with all the concerned stakeholders until they are solved or closed;

Meetings of the CMC

- The CMC meets every 2nd week of the month, in the DUA.
- Ad hoc meetings can also be convened in case of emergency or to follow up violations of Human Rights or abuses inside the DUA.
- The nominated SW Officers from Directorate level pays regular visits to the CMC at least once a year.
- Ad hoc meetings between the nominated SW Officers from Directorate level and the CMC can be convened either in the district or in SW Directorate in Lahore whenever needed or in case of emergency.

Confidentiality

CMC members have to act upon the following confidentiality rules:

- CMC members should proceed with all complaints in transparent and unbiased manner and should resolve the cases on merit.
- CMC members should respect the confidentiality of the cases and should not leak any information out.
- CMC members should not take retaliation for any complaint raised by any resident against any CMC member.
- CMC members should pay attention to all security and safety of complainants.
- CMC members shall maintain record of all cases safely to avoid any breach of confidentiality.

Violation of these rules will be treated under PEEDA Act, 2006 or notified DUA Protection Guidelines and lead to cancellation of membership of CMC.