



GP WEALTH MANAGEMENT

INDEPENDENT THINKING WORKING FOR YOU

Complaint Handling Policy and Procedures Manual

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1.0 Introduction

The Complaint Handling Policy and Procedures Manual, which has been approved by senior management provides written policies and procedures for dealing with an account holder which ensures that a complaint is dealt with promptly and fairly. All Financial Advisors, Employees, Compliance Officers, Supervisors and Senior Management must adhere to the policies and procedures to ensure compliance with the Rules, By-laws and Policies of the MFDA and applicable securities legislation.

This manual is made available to all Financial Advisors, Employees, Compliance Officers, Supervisors and Senior Management and is maintained and updated regularly at head office. The most up to date version can be obtained on line by visiting the secured site at <http://gpwealth.ca> and clicking through to the “Dealer Services” section.

2.0 General Complaint Handling Process

A complaint means any statement, written or verbal of an account holder, former account holder or any person acting on behalf of an account holder or former account holder alleging grievance involving the conduct, business or affairs of GP Wealth Management Corporation (“GPWM”) or any financial advisor while the financial advisor was registered with GPWM. In certain instances, a verbal complaint may warrant the same treatment as a written complaint. Such a decision is made based on the nature and severity of the allegations.

Generally, a complaint is associated with the breach of a rule, act or fiduciary duty and a customer service issue is a failure of an administrative process.

2.1 How to File a Complaint

An account holder, former account holder or non- account holder (“complainant”) wishing to lodge a complaint with **GP Wealth Management** should make their complaint to our head office by contacting the **Compliance Department** by phone at 1-800-608-7707 or by email at complaint@gpwealth.ca or alternatively to any branch manager or financial advisor.

A complainant wishing to lodge a complaint must be forwarded to qualified compliance or supervisory staff to be handled. Compliance or supervisory staff should make every effort to encourage a complainant to make a complaint in writing or by email where possible.

If a complainant has difficulty putting their complaint in writing, compliance or supervisory staff should make every effort to provide assistance. For confidentiality reasons, a complaint should only be dealt with the complainant unless a complainant has designated another individual who has the complainant’s express written authorization to deal with us.

2.1.1 Accepting a Complaint

A complaint may be lodged in several manners including making a:

1. Verbal complaint

A verbal complaint must be recorded in writing by qualified compliance or supervisory staff. Every effort should be made by compliance or supervisory staff to document the verbal complaint with detailed notes including the date and time of the conversation, the full name of the account holder, the primary allegation of the complaint, any secondary allegations, time frame of the occurrence or event which is the subject of the complaint and any other relevant details.

Where a verbal complaint raises allegations to which Part II of MFDA Policy 3 applies, GPWM must provide its initial response in writing providing a summary of the facts of the allegations to the account holder to acknowledge and include a request for any additional reasonable information required to resolve the complaint. Compliance or supervisory staff must also ask that the complaint and any additional information be documented in writing. However, where an account holder declines to do so, compliance or supervisory staff must continue to thoroughly investigate the complaint.

2. Person acting on behalf of an account holder or former account holder

An account holder or former account holder may choose to designate another individual to deal with a complaint. The account holder's express written authorization is required by GPWM. All communication related to the complaint must be sent to the authorized individual and copied to the account holder.

Compliance or supervisory staff should obtain appropriate documentation of the account holder or former account holder's authorization to ensure adequate privacy protection of an account holder's plan (account) information and to ensure the wishes of the account holder are being followed.

In addition to Powers of Attorney, it may be appropriate to accept other forms of written authorization from an account holder or former account holder, provided compliance or supervisory staff is satisfied as to their authenticity. Compliance or supervisory staff may need to speak with the account holder or former account holder in order to verify their wishes. A common type of agent situation would be an adult child acting for an elderly parent, which should in most cases be easily authenticated.

3. Complaints from non-account holders

A non-account holder wishing to lodge a complaint must be forwarded to qualified compliance or supervisory staff to be handled. Compliance or supervisory staff should make every effort to encourage a non-account holder to make a complaint in writing or by email where possible.

The complaint must be documented with detailed notes including the date and time of the conversation, the full name of the non-account holder, the primary allegation of the complaint, any secondary allegations, time frame of the occurrence or event which is the subject of the complaint and any other relevant details.

Where a non-account holder raises allegations to which Part II of MFDA Policy 3 applies (except for allegations of unsuitable investments or unsuitable leveraging), GPWM must handle the complaint pursuant to the formal complaint handling procedures under Part II of MFDA Policy 3 due to their serious nature.

In such cases, compliance or supervisory staff is entitled to consider the absence of an account relationship in making its substantive response. Additionally, in certain situations, the non-account holder may be under the impression that they are an account holder of GPWM. Although this belief is mistaken, there may be factual situations where it would be reasonable for the non-account holder to believe they are an account holder.

GPWM must provide its initial response in writing summarizing the facts of the allegations to the non-account holder to acknowledge including a request for any additional reasonable information required to resolve the complaint. Compliance or supervisory staff must also ask that the complaint and any additional information be documented in writing. However, where a non-account holder declines to do so, compliance or supervisory staff must continue to thoroughly investigate the complaint.

2.1.2 Financial Advisor Reporting a Complaint

A complaint received by a Financial Advisor from an account holder or former account holder must be reported to the branch manager and head office personnel, specifically a compliance officer, supervisory staff or senior management within 2 business days and **must be in accordance with MFDA Policy 6, Part A, section 4.1 (a)**.

Please refer to GPWM Account Operations and Procedures Manual, section 7.4 Financial Advisor Reporting Requirements for additional details and procedures.

2.1.3 Reporting a Complaint on METS

Once a complaint has been received and acknowledged, supervisory staff must report the complaint to the MFDA through the electronic reporting system, METS, within 5 business days of the occurrence of the event, with the exception of events reported under section 6.1 (a) of MFDA Policy 6.

Refer to MFDA Policy 6, section 6 for further details and procedures.

2.1.4 Reporting Updates of a Complaint on METS

Supervisory staff should update a previously reported complaint with the MFDA through the electronic reporting system (METS) within 5 days of the occurrence of the update or resolution.

Refer to MFDA Policy 6, section 7 for further details and procedures.

2.2 Providing Complaint Disclosure

Providing an account holder with complaint disclosure starts at account opening. GPWM must provide a new account holder with:

- A copy of the “Client Complaint Information” document approved by the MFDA. The “Client Complaint Information” document provides information about options for making a complaint.
- A copy of the “Summary of GP Wealth Management Complaint Handling Procedures” which is written in a manner that can be clearly understood by an account holder. The summary provides the steps that GPWM will take to investigate and analyze the case and the communications that the account holder will receive during the process.

2.2.1 Acknowledging a Complaint

Once a complaint has been recorded by a branch manager, compliance officer or supervisory staff, an acknowledgement letter must be delivered to the complainant generally within **five days**. Provide the “Client Complaint Information” document and “Summary of GP Wealth Management Complaint Handling Procedures” document to the complainant with the “Complaint Acknowledgement Letter”.

Refer to “Template_ Complaint Acknowledgement Letter”

3.0 Complaint Response Procedures

The complaint handling process generally involves a number of steps that include:

1. Receiving the complaint
2. Providing a complaint acknowledgment letter to the complainant
3. Interviewing the complainant and financial advisor
4. Providing an initial response letter to the complainant with findings and comments
5. Providing a substantive response letter with findings, an offer to settle, a decline of any request for compensation and alternative complaint resolution options.

3.1 Type of Complaint

An adequate and reasonable assessment of a complaint must be completed by a branch manager, compliance officer or supervisory staff. All complaints are subject to the complaint handling requirements set out in Part I of [MFDA Policy 3](#).

A complaint must be assessed to determine whether, in the reasonable professional judgment of a branch manager, compliance officer or supervisory staff handling the complaint, it should be treated in accordance with the Additional Complaint Handling Requirements prescribed by Part II of [MFDA Policy 3](#).

3.1.1 General Complaint (Part I; MFDA Policy 3)

A complaint subject to the complaint handling requirements set out in Part I of [MFDA Policy 3](#) would include the following types of complaints:

- non-disclosure of fees
- non-disclosure of DSC penalties
- delay in transfer of accounts
- failure to follow trading instructions

A branch manager, compliance officer or supervisory staff should consider the complainant’s expectation as to how the complaint should be handled and whether the complainant is alleging any financial harm. Where a branch manager, compliance officer or supervisory staff determines that a complaint does not meet any of these criteria, the complaint must be handled fairly and promptly but can be concluded through an informal resolution.

3.1.2 Serious Complaint (Part II; MFDA Policy 3)

A branch manager, compliance officer or supervisory staff must complete a detailed review to determine whether the primary allegation is of a more serious nature to which Part II of [MFDA Policy 3](#) applies. Any complaints reported to a branch manager, compliance officer or supervisory staff that has been categorized as a complaint subject to Part II of [MFDA Policy 3](#) requires the acknowledgement, initial response and the substantive response be provided to the complainant in writing.

A complaint subject to the complaint handling requirements set out in Part II of [MFDA Policy 3](#) would include the following types of complaints:

- a breach of account holder confidentiality;
- unsuitable investments or leveraging recommendations relating to GP Wealth Management business;
- theft, fraud, misappropriation of funds or securities, forgery, money laundering, market manipulation, insider trading, misrepresentation, or unauthorized trading;
- engaging in securities related business outside of GP Wealth Management;
- engaging in an undeclared occupation outside GP Wealth Management;
- personal financial dealings with an account holder, money laundering, market manipulation or insider trading; or
- any other matter that reasonably requires the application of Part II.

In this regard, a compliance officer or supervisory staff should consider whether the allegation is similar in nature to those set out above, the complainant's reasonable expectation of how the complaint should be handled and whether the complainant is alleging any financial harm.

Refer to [MFDA Policy 3](#), section 7 for further details and procedures.

3.2 Responding to a Complaint

All complaints, verbal and written, must be handled in a fair and timely manner in accordance with GPWM Policy and [MFDA Policy 3](#).

3.2.1 Complainant Interview and/or Statement

A branch manager, compliance officer or supervisory staff should request an interview either by phone or in person with the complainant soon after delivery of the "Complaint Acknowledgement Letter". A branch manager, compliance officer or supervisory staff must conduct a thorough interview with factual notations including an analysis that is reasonable in the circumstances, using a balanced approach. In the absence of an interview, a branch manager, compliance officer or supervisory staff should request a "statement" from the complainant from a list of queries that would otherwise be used in an interview.

3.2.2 Financial Advisor Interview and/or Statement

A branch manager, compliance officer or supervisory staff should request an interview either by phone or in person with the financial advisor soon after delivery of the "Complaint Acknowledgement Letter" being sent to the complainant. A branch manager, compliance officer or supervisory staff must

conduct a thorough interview with factual notations including an analysis that is reasonable in the circumstances, using a balanced approach. In addition to the interview, a branch manager, compliance officer or supervisory staff must request a “statement” from the financial advisor documenting the list of queries that were part of the interview.

3.2.3 Preparing an Initial Response to a General Complaint

Any complaints that are of a general nature and are subject to informal resolution must be handled fairly and responded to promptly.(i.e. generally in less time than it would take for complaints subject to the Additional Complaint Handling Requirements prescribed by Part II of [MFDA Policy 3](#)).

A branch manager, compliance officer or supervisory staff must resolve the complaint in accordance with GPWM internal complaint handling policies and procedures. In addition to the “Complaint Acknowledgement Letter”, an initial response must be delivered to the complainant generally within 30 days of the acknowledgement of the complaint. In certain circumstances a branch manager, compliance officer or supervisory staff may determine that the Acknowledgement Letter may include the initial and substantive response where the complaint can be resolved immediately.

Refer to “Template_ Complaint Acknowledgement Letter”

3.2.4 Preparing an Initial Response to a Serious Complaint

Any complaints that are of a serious nature and are subject to a formal resolution must be handled fairly and responded to promptly and are subject to the Additional Complaint Handling Requirements prescribed by Part II of [MFDA Policy 3](#).

A branch manager, compliance officer or supervisory staff must resolve the complaint in accordance with GPWM internal complaint handling policies and procedures. In addition to the “Complaint Acknowledgement Letter”, an initial response must be delivered to the complainant generally within 30 days of the acknowledgement of the complaint.

The initial response letter should include the following information:

- The name, job title and full contact information of the individual handling the complaint;
- A status-to-date of the complaint;
- A request to the complainant for any additional reasonable information required to resolve the complaint;
- A statement indicating that the complainant should contact the individual handling the complaint if he/she would like to offer additional information, inquire about the status of the complaint including findings or comments;
- A general time frame where a substantive response will be delivered to the complainant

3.3 Providing a Substantive Response

The substantive response in a serious matter such as those that fall under Part II of [MFDA Policy 3](#) should:

- provide a thorough analysis;

- objectively address every aspect of the complaint including the allegation, findings, comments, recommendation and conclusion or position of GPWM
- provide the rationale for the decision;
- address any requests for reimbursement; and
- provide guidance to the complainant as to their options on how to resolve their problem, e.g., how to unwind an unsuitable leverage loan, or how to address an unsuitable mutual fund holding in an account

GPWM should set out the possible outcomes of a complaint for the complainant. For example, the substantive response may include an offer to resolve the complaint, a denial of the complaint with reasons or another appropriate response.

The substantive response should also include information about communicating after the substantive response has been acknowledged by the complainant and any other options for the complainant if they are unsatisfied with the response (e.g. OBSI, MFDA).

3.4 Preparing a Summary or Chronology of the Event

The following list sets out the type of information regarding a complaint that should be kept in a consolidated log located at Member head-office:

- The complainant's name;
- The date of the complaint;
- The nature of the complaint;
- The name of the individual who is the subject of the complaint;
- The product or services which are the subject of the complaint;
- Record each update including the date and event, i.e. letter to complainant, interview with complainant or financial advisor, telephone contact with complainant or financial advisor with notes of discussion, and
- The date and conclusions of the decision rendered in connection with the complaint.

Please refer to the "Complaint Handling Chronology Summary" sheet for further details and procedures.

4.0 Internal Discipline

A complaint must be assessed to determine whether, in the reasonable professional judgment of a branch manager, compliance officer or supervisory staff handling the complaint, it should be treated in accordance with the Additional Complaint Handling Requirements prescribed by Part II of [MFDA Policy 3](#). A complaint that falls under Part II of [MFDA Policy 3](#) will require that the branch manager, compliance officer or supervisory staff complete an assessment in conjunction with handling the complaint to determine if the financial advisor should be placed under immediate strict supervision.

A compliance officer or supervisory staff that designates a financial advisor under strict supervision as a result of a serious complaint as identified under Part II of [MFDA Policy 3](#) may be required to conduct a full desk review and/or field review.

Any procedures or conduct identified that breaches GPWM Policy and/or MFDA By-laws, Rules and Policies will be subjected to appropriate internal disciplinary measures.

5.0 Other Requirements

Once a complaint has been received and acknowledged, a branch manager, compliance officer or supervisory staff must review the allegations to determine what other requirements must be implemented in the course of handling the complaint.

5.1 Review Internal Policy and Procedures

A general review of the Compliance Handling Policy and Procedures Manual should be initiated by a branch manager, compliance officer or supervisory staff as part of acknowledging and managing a complaint.

5.2 Review MFDA Policy 3

A general review of [MFDA Policy 3](#) should be initiated by a branch manager, compliance officer or supervisory staff as part of acknowledging and managing a complaint.

5.3 Confidentiality Restrictions

GPWM or its financial advisor must not impose confidentiality restrictions with respect to the MFDA or any other securities regulatory authority or other regulatory/ law enforcement organizations as part of the resolution of a complaint. This includes restricting a complainant from making a complaint, continuing with an existing complaint, cooperating with an investigation or testifying at a hearing. It applies to any resolution of a complaint, including a settlement agreement, or to any other resolution or agreement with a complainant.

A financial advisor may not, without the prior written consent of GP Wealth Management, enter into any settlement agreement with, pay any compensation to or make any restitution to a complainant.

A financial advisor, branch manager, compliance officer or supervisory staff cannot impose confidentiality restrictions on a complainant or require a withdrawal of a complaint with respect to the MFDA or a securities commission, regulatory authority, law enforcement agency, SRO, stock exchange or other trading market as part of a resolution of a dispute or otherwise.

GPWM may include information regarding any releases or waivers it may have required complainants to sign in the case of an offer of financial settlement.

5.4 Errors and Omissions Reporting

A financial advisor and supervisory staff are expected to engage errors and omissions insurance policies ("E&O") to protect them from financial liability. However, the terms and conditions of an E&O policy cannot absolve GPWM of its regulatory responsibilities. GPWM must balance the requirements of their E&O policy with the regulatory requirements imposed by the MFDA.

GPWM cannot rely on their E&O provider to handle complaints on their behalf where the E&O provider does not conform to MFDA complaint handling timelines and other applicable standards. GPWM is required to review the analysis of the E&O providers with respect to complaint handling to ensure that it complies with all MFDA complaint handling guidelines as set out in MFDA Policy No. 3.

5.5 Record Retention

All documentation associated with a complaint must be maintained at head office for a minimum of 7 years from the creation of the record under Part V of [MFDA Policy 3](#) and should include the materials reviewed in the investigation and the name, title, and date individuals were interviewed for the investigation (if applicable).

5.6 Posting the “Summary of Complaint Handling Procedures”

A branch manager, compliance officer or supervisory staff must make a complainant aware of the complaint handling process by referring to [gpwealth.ca](#) under “making a complaint”.

The complaint handling process is made available so that a complainant is informed as to how to file a complaint and to whom they should address a complaint with a point of contact at head office

6.0 Reference Documents

1. [Member Regulation Notice MR-0073 Complaint Handling–MFDA POLICY NO. 3](#)
2. [Guide to Creating a Summary of Member Complaint Handling Procedures](#)
3. [MFDA Policy 3](#)
4. [MFDA Policy 6](#)
5. [Member Regulation Notice MR-0064 Maintaining Evidence of Disclosure](#)
6. Complaint Acknowledgement Letter
7. “Summary of Complaint Handling Process” document
8. “Complaint Handling Chronology Summary” document
9. “Complaint Situation Analysis Document”

7.0 Document Revision History

All revisions made to this document are tracked in the following table.

Date	Author	Revision
	Paula Sprentz	Created
October 15, 2009	Paula Sprentz	Revised
November 20, 2010	Paula Sprentz	Revised Update; Section 2.0 General Complaint Handling Process Update; Section 2.2 Providing Complaint Disclosure Update; Section 3.0 Complaint Response Procedures Add; Section 3.3 Preparing a Summary or Chronology of the Event Add; Section 4.0 Internal Discipline Add; Section 5.0 Other Requirements Add; Section 6.0 Reference Documents Change; Section 6 to Section 7 Document Revision History