

Code of Practice for Complaint Handling

Contacting Worldwide Group

Companies within Worldwide Group include:

Worldwide Connect Limited, Worldwide Connect Telecommunications Limited, Worldwide Group Internet Services Limited, Worldwide Connect Services Limited.

In Writing

Client Relations Department
Worldwide Group
Worldwide House
Equinox, 31 Commerce Road
Peterborough Business Park
Lynchwood
Peterborough
Cambridgeshire
PE2 6LR

Email

clientrelations@worldwidegroup.co.uk

Telephone

0844 241 2000

The lines are open Monday to Friday inclusive from 9.00am to 5.30pm. (excluding Bank Holidays)

Fax

0844 241 2001

Web

www.worldwidegroup.co.uk

Introduction

Worldwide Group provides telecommunications solutions to Business Clients.

As Worldwide is a reseller of telecommunications products and services provided by manufacturers and other carriers, this Code applies solely to the services under our direct control. This Code serves to provide information that details our relationship with our Clients.

We have developed a Code of Practice to reflect our approach to customer service and to give existing and future customers an overview of our Company and the services we provide.

What the Code Covers

This is a mandatory code, which aims to set standards of good customer care practice, which Worldwide Group will follow when dealing with small business customers. The Code will provide important information to you and explains how Worldwide Group will promote certain communication products and services.

This code is aimed at sole-traders, partnerships, limited liability partnerships, and limited companies. This code does not apply to resellers, dealers or associates of Worldwide Group.

About this Code

Within the Code, 'you' means the customer and 'we', 'us' or 'our' means Worldwide Group. In this code, 'customer' includes people dealing with us on behalf of a business, with the authority of the business' owners. For example, this may include office staff that talk to us about the availability of products or services and/or an authorised consultant who is interested in understanding what tariffs are available. Not all the products and services available from Worldwide Group are covered by this code. This Code applies when the above products or

services are promoted or sold directly to you over the phone, on the Internet, by post, face-to-face or by any other similar method.

Our Customers

Worldwide understands that customer satisfaction is the most important part of our business. Our company values are based on this. Whether you need new services, to check on the progress of a service enhancement, require new number ranges or revise your service level agreements, we will do our best to meet your requirements to your satisfaction. Worldwide values its clients and aims for the highest standards of account management and customer service. By investing in our people and in systems to support our customer care activity and by continually developing our services, we will deliver the best in customer care and stay ahead of our competitors. We have developed this Code of Practice to reflect our approach to customer service and to give existing and future customers an overview of our company and the services we provide.

Our Commitments To Our Customers

This Code does not form part of our contract with you but we pledge that we will act fairly and reasonably in all our dealings with you by striving to meet all the commitments and standards in this code. The commitments are shown below

- We will make sure that our advertising and promotional literature is clear and not misleading and that you are given clear information about our products and services.
- When you have chosen a product or service, we will give you clear information about how it works (where this might not otherwise be obvious or common knowledge), the terms and conditions and the charges that apply
- We will deal quickly and sympathetically with things that go wrong and consider all cases of criticism positively
- We will help you use the product or service by keeping you informed about any changes to the charges, terms and conditions or acceptable use policy.

Your Business Information

We will treat your business information as private and confidential (even when you are no longer a customer). We will not reveal your name and address or details about your account to anyone, including other companies within our group (unless you have otherwise agreed), other than in the following exceptional circumstances when we are required to do this by law:

- If we have to give the information by law
- If there is a duty to the regulator (currently Ofcom) to reveal the information
- If our interests mean we must give the information (for example, to prevent fraud or trace malicious calls). However, we will not use this as a reason for giving information about you for marketing purposes.
- If you ask us to reveal the information, or if we have your permission
- If we are asked to respond to an enquiry about you, we will make sure we have your written permission before we give it.

Calls to and from Worldwide Group may be recorded for a range of reasons including quality, security, training or customer service reporting.

Please make sure you let us know as soon as possible if the nature of your business changes or if you change your

- Name & Business name;
- Address;
- Contact phone number; or
- Email address (if this is how we communicate with you)

Terms & Conditions

The terms and conditions describe the general legal and contractual obligations between our customers and us. The details of the terms and conditions will vary depending on the kind of

service we offer. The terms and conditions for all our standard retail services can be found on our website www.worldwidegroup.co.uk or by contacting our Client Relations Department.

Tariffs

Worldwide tailors tariffs to suit your requirements, which is why it is important that you keep us informed of any changes to your call patterns. During your consultation, a bespoke tariff will be presented to you to suit your call pattern.

Our Services

Worldwide provides business telecommunications solutions to our Clients.

Least Cost Routing, Telephone Systems, Broadband, Video Conferencing, Line Rental, Mobile Phones, Non Geographical Numbers.

To obtain further information about any of our products please contact the Client Relations Department. A Consultant of Worldwide will advise you on the service most fitting to your requirements. For more information on services available to Business Clients, please call our Client Relations Department on 0844 241 2000. The lines are open Monday to Friday inclusive from 09.00am to 5.30pm. Or view our Web site at www.worldwidegroup.co.uk

Billing and Payment

We generally invoice our customers on a monthly basis but this may vary depending on the service concerned. For more detailed information, please contact our Customer Care Department. We accept the following methods of payment: Direct Debit, BACS, Cheques, Credit Cards and Cash, although for some services or tariffs, we may require direct debit and/or other security. We are able to provide itemised bills to customers who request this, and also special format bills for those with a disability.

Financial Assessment

Before we agree to provide any products or services to you, we may assess whether we feel you will be able to pay the charges. This assessment will probably include looking at the following:

- Information you give us, including information about your business name.
- How you have handled similar accounts in the past.
- Information we get from credit reference agencies and others, such as parent companies, existing suppliers.
- Credit-assessment techniques, such as credit scoring
- Any deposit provided

When you apply for any products or services, you agree that we may reveal your account details to credit reference agencies and the checks we may make with them. We may give credit reference agencies other information about the day-to-day running of your account.

Cancellation Procedures

Should you at any time decide to cancel your telephone services with Worldwide you are required to give us 60 days' prior notice in writing, except where a service is supplied subject to a minimum period. Our normal minimum contract term is 24 months. We will charge you for any calls made from the date of receipt of written cancellation until the actual cancellation date.

Faults and Repairs

We aim to fix the fault and restore full service within a standard response time of 8 working hours from when you notify us of a fault on our service. This is a target time which means that we do not offer any compensation if we fail to meet this target unless we have specifically agreed with you that such compensation shall be payable. We also offer additional service level agreements which are agreed separately with our customers. These service level agreements are tailor-made to correspond to individual customers' needs. You can obtain additional information by contacting our Client Relations Department on 0844 241 2000. The lines are open Monday to Friday inclusive from 09.00am to 5.30pm.

Disconnections Procedure

Worldwide would like to avoid suspending or terminating your telephone service. However, we may at our absolute discretion suspend or terminate the provision of the services with or without notice. Listed below are some of the circumstances in which we reserve the right to disconnect your service:

- if you are in breach of our Terms and Conditions
- if we believe your service is being used in a way forbidden by your agreement with Worldwide
- if you fail to pay your telephone invoice
- if we are obliged to do so in order to comply with an order, instruction or request of government, an emergency service organisation or another competent authority
- if we cease to be able to supply the services due to any cause beyond our reasonable control
- if fraud is suspected. If we detect abnormal usage we may restrict our service immediately to avoid the build up of further debt until we can contact you to establish the reasons for this abnormal usage. We reserve the right to prosecute in all cases of fraud.

Upon the suspension or termination of the service, all amounts you owe to Worldwide for use of the services shall become due and payable in full on demand. You will have no right to withhold or offset any such amounts in these circumstances.

Erroneous Disconnection

Should your service be suspended due to an error on our part, you will be reconnected without penalty.

Payment Options

In order to avoid any disruption to service, we strongly recommend Business Clients to pay via an automated payment method such as Direct Debit. Under the Direct Debit guarantee, Clients will be given five days' advance notice of any transaction to be made against their bank account. Alternatively, Clients may settle their invoices by BACS, CHAPS, Major Credit Card or a Cheque posted to the address shown on the invoice.

We want to help our customers to manage and pay their bills from us. Our measures in this area include:

- promoting good customer service
- encouraging prompt and full payment of bills
- minimising debt and disconnections due to non-payment of bills
- strengthening our customers' awareness of our company procedures in this area. It is our intention to help to the best of our ability customers with payment difficulties as well as to explain the actions we will have to take if our bills are not paid in full and on time.

Debt Collection

Should all usual credit control routes fail, then we will pass the details of any outstanding amount to a Debt Collections Agency to collect on our behalf. The Debt Collection Agencies are licensed by the Office of Fair Trading to undertake this work.

Complaint Handling Procedure

At Worldwide Group we constantly strive to provide you with an exceptional service. However, we recognise that we sometimes get it wrong and when we do, we want you to tell us so that we can put things right as quickly and smoothly as possible. With this in mind, we have developed a Complaints Procedure which explains who you should contact and what to do if you have a complaint about Worldwide Group services. The Complaints Procedure is described here.

How to Contact Us

For what ever reason you encounter a problem with the service provided by us, please contact our Client Relations Department on 0844 241 2000. The lines are open Monday to Friday from 09.00am to 5.30pm. (Excluding Bank Holidays)

If you prefer, you can write to us detailing the nature of your complaint. The address is:

Client Relations Department
Worldwide Group
Worldwide House
Equinox, 31 Commerce Road
Peterborough Business Park
Lynchwood
Peterborough
Cambridgeshire
PE2 6LR

Alternatively, you can e-mail us: clientrelations@worldwidegroup.co.uk

Please ensure when contacting us that you provide us with your correct address, billing address (if different) and Client reference number.

If contacting us by telephone, you will be asked about the nature of your complaint and we will seek to resolve the problem whilst you are still on the phone. If this is not possible we will agree a course of action with you.

How we deal with your complaint

When we have registered your complaint we will give it an identification number that you may refer to in any further contacts with us regarding your complaint. We will make every effort to resolve your complaint when you first contact us. However this is not always possible and we may have to investigate your complaint further. Whatever your complaint, our initial response will be no longer than 5 working days from when you notified us. We aim to resolve all complaints within 20 working days from when you notify us but more complex cases may take longer.

Escalation within Worldwide

If you are not happy about the way in which your complaint has been handled, you can speak to our Escalations Manager, Carmen Pell. If after having contacted Carmen you are still not satisfied about the way we have dealt with your complaint, you should ask for your complaint to be reviewed by the Operations Director or the Commercial Director.

Taking Further Action

If we have not been able to resolve your complaint to your satisfaction we will send you a letter confirming this. This letter is normally referred to as a "deadlock letter" and confirms that there is nothing more we can do with respect to your complaint. An unresolved complaint can be referred to Otelco twelve weeks after first making it.

Escalation Procedure outside of Worldwide Group

Should your complaint not be resolved to your satisfaction following the above procedure, you can refer your complaint to Otelo, an alternative dispute resolution service for consumers and small business.

Office of Communications

The Office of Communications (Ofcom) is the regulator for the UK communications industries, with responsibilities across television, radio, telecommunications and wireless communications services.

Ofcom
Riverside House
2a Southwark Bridge Road
London
SE1 9HA
Tel: 0845 456 3000 or 0207 981 3040
Fax: 0845 456 3333
Text Phone: 0845 456 3003
E-mail: contact@ofcom.org.uk
Web: www.ofcom.org.uk

Telecommunications Ombudsman

The Telecommunications Ombudsman (Otelo) is a free and independent service that deals with complaints by residential and small business customers against member telecommunications companies.

Office of the Telecommunications Ombudsman (Otelo)
PO Box 730
Warrington
WA4 6WU
Local rate phone number: 0845 050 1614
Textphone: 18001 0845 051 1513
Fax: 01925 430059
E-mail: enquiries@os-communications.org
Website: www.ombudsman-services.org

Premium Rate Services

All calls to Premium Rate Service numbers are charged at a higher rate than normal local, regional and national calls (numbers commencing with 09). All Premium Rate Services (PRS) numbers and the associated Premium Rate Service industry are regulated by PhonepayPlus. This means that if you have a complaint about the way in which Premium Rate Service numbers are advertised or managed, the type of service provided or the way in which information received via a PRS number has been presented during the calls concerned, PhonepayPlus will be pleased to hear from you.

PhonepayPlus
Clove Building
4 Maguire Street
London SE1 2NQ
Phone: 0207 940 7474
Fax: 0207 940 7456
Website: www.phonepayplus.org.uk

How to Obtain this Code of Practice

This Code of Practice is published on our Web site www.worldwidegroup.co.uk Additional copies can be requested free of charge. We will make special arrangements on a case-by-case basis for Braille, audio or large print. You can request a copy of the Code to be posted to you via the following means:

By Telephone:

Client Relations Department on 0844 241 2000.
The lines are open Monday to Friday inclusive from 09.00am to 5.30pm.

By writing to:

Client Relations Department
Worldwide Group
Worldwide House
Equinox, 31 Commerce Road
Peterborough Business Park
Lynchwood
Peterborough
Cambridgeshire
PE2 6LR

By email:

clientrelations@worldwidegroup.co.uk

Additional Information

If you have any questions about the Code, you should contact us.

Our Code will be reviewed on a regular basis and in accordance with Ofcom requirements. This Code has been approved by Ofcom for the purposes of section 52 of the communications Act 2003. The Guidelines for producing codes of practice are detailed on Ofcom's web site at http://www.ofcom.gov.uk/telecoms/ioi/g_a_regime/gce/ccodes/ccodes.pdf