

Fair Rubber e.V.

Handling Allegations, Complaints and Appeals

Document Title: Handling Procedure for Allegations, Complaints and Appeals

Document ID: FR-PRO-ASR-Allegations-01

Version: 1.0

Approval Body: Board of the Fair Rubber e.V.

Approval Date: 21/08/2026

Effective Date: 27/08/2026

Confidentiality Level: Public

Amendment History

Version	Date	Description	Approved By
1.0	27/08/2026	Initial adoption	Board

Content

1. Purpose.....	2
2. Scope	3
3. Roles and Responsibilities	3
3.1. Secretariat	3
3.2. Board	3
3.3. Certification Body	3
4. Procedure Steps.....	4
4.1. Submission of Allegation, Complaint and/or Appeal	4
4.2. Registration and Acknowledgement	4
4.3. Secretariat Screening.....	4
4.4. Preliminary Assessment	4
4.5. Clarification Phase (if applicable)	5
4.6. Investigation	5
4.7. Interim Measures (if applicable)	5
4.8. Decision-Making Process.....	5
4.9. Communication of Outcome	6
4.10. Corrective Actions and Follow-up.....	6
4.11. Closure	6
5. Confidentiality and Impartiality.....	6
6. Record Keeping and Documentation.....	6
7. Timeline Commitments	7
8. Review and Continuous Improvement.....	7

1. Purpose

This Procedure defines the operational steps for receiving, assessing, investigating, deciding on, and closing allegations, complaints & appeals within the Fair Rubber system in especially in accordance with:

- The Allegations, Complaints & Appeals Policy;
- The Constitution of Fair Rubber e.V.;

The Procedure ensures that allegations, complaints & appeals are handled in a consistent, transparent, proportionate, and accountable manner, supporting the credibility and integrity of the Fair Rubber system and logo.

2. Scope

This Procedure applies to allegations, complaints and/or appeals concerning:

- a) Members and supporting members of Fair Rubber e.V.;
- b) Certification Bodies approved by Fair Rubber;
- c) Supplier partners operating under the Fair Rubber Standard;
- d) Misuse of the Fair Rubber logo or claims;
- e) Actions or omissions that may harm the credibility, integrity, or objectives of the Fair Rubber system.

This Procedure operates as a non-judicial governance mechanism and does not replace statutory legal remedies.

3. Roles and Responsibilities

3.1. Secretariat

The Secretariat is responsible for:

- a) Managing the allegations, complaints and/or appeals mechanism;
- b) Receiving and registering allegations, complaints and/or appeals;
- c) Conducting completeness checks and preliminary screening;
- d) Leading and coordinating investigation and verification activities;
- e) Decision-making based on the investigation of all cases.
- f) Communicating with complainants and respondents;
- g) Maintaining records and documentation.

3.2. Board

The Board is responsible for:

- a) Oversight of the allegations, complaints and appeals mechanism;
- b) Reviewing cases with significant governance, reputation, or systemic implications;
- c) Taking decisions on sanctions within its authority;
- d) Ensuring independence and management of conflicts of interest.

3.3. Certification Body

Where an allegation, complaint or appeal concerns certification status or compliance with the Fair Rubber Standard:

- a) The Certification Body is responsible for certification-related findings during audit;
- b) The Certification Body cooperates with the Secretariat during investigations;
- c) The Certification Body may conduct additional audits or verification activities where required.

4. Procedure Steps

4.1. Submission of Allegation, Complaint, Appeal

Any natural or legal person may submit an allegation, complaint and/or appeal to the Secretariat through officially designated contact channels like mail or Email.

The allegation should include, where available:

- a) Identification of the respondent;
- b) Description of the alleged breach;
- c) Relevant dates and circumstances;
- d) Supporting documentation or evidence.

Anonymous submissions will be considered where sufficient information (see b, c, d) is provided.

4.2. Registration and Acknowledgement

Upon receipt, the Secretariat:

- a) Assigns a case reference number;
- b) Registers the allegation, complaint or appeal in a confidential case register;
- c) Acknowledges receipt within ten working days, where contact details are available.

4.3. Secretariat Screening

The Secretariat conducts an initial screening to verify:

- a) Whether the submission falls within the scope of the Allegations, Complaints and Appeals Policy;
- b) Whether sufficient information is available to proceed;
- c) Whether another Fair Rubber mechanism is more appropriate.

Incomplete submissions may be returned with a request for clarification.

4.4. Preliminary Assessment

Where the submission is admissible, the Secretariat conducts a preliminary assessment to determine:

- a) The potential severity and systemic relevance of the issue;
- b) The appropriate handling pathway (Secretariat, Board, Certification Body);
- c) Whether immediate risk mitigation measures are required.

4.5. Clarification Phase (if applicable)

Where necessary, the Secretariat may request written clarification from the respondent or complainant.

Failure to provide clarification within a reasonable timeframe may result in:

- a) Closure due to insufficient evidence; or
- b) Escalation based on available information.

4.6. Investigation

Where further examination is required, the Secretariat coordinates proportionate investigation measures, which may include:

- a) Desk-based document review;
- b) Requests for additional information;
- c) Consultation with the Certification Body;
- d) Consultation with Certification Committee
- e) Commissioning of independent expertise;
- f) Follow-up or additional audits.

Investigations shall be conducted in accordance with principles of due process, confidentiality, and proportionality.

4.7. Interim Measures (if applicable)

Where necessary to protect system credibility or prevent ongoing harm, interim measures may be applied, including:

- a) Temporary suspension of logo use;
- b) Temporary restriction of claims;
- c) Recommendation to the Certification Committee for temporary suspension of certification.

Interim measures shall be proportionate and documented.

4.8. Decision-Making Process

Following investigation, the Secretariat prepares a documented case summary and decides or recommends.

Depending on the nature of the case:

- a) Governance-level sanctions are decided by the Board;
- b) all other cases may be closed by the Secretariat.

Decisions are taken in accordance with applicable policies and the Constitution.

4.9. Communication of Outcome

The Secretariat communicates the decision in writing to:

- a) The respondent;
- b) The complainant, subject to confidentiality limitations;
- c) Relevant internal governance bodies or Certification Bodies.

Where applicable, required corrective actions and timelines are clearly specified.

4.10. Corrective Actions and Follow-up

Where corrective measures are imposed:

- a) Deadlines are defined;
- b) Evidence of implementation is required;
- c) Follow-up verification may be conducted.

Failure to implement corrective measures may result in escalation in accordance with the Membership Application and Termination Policy.

4.11. Closure

A case is formally closed when:

- a) A final decision has been implemented;
- b) Required corrective measures have been completed;
- c) Monitoring confirms resolution.

Closure is documented in the confidential case register.

5. Confidentiality and Impartiality

The secretariat ensures that complainants and whistleblowers are protected and that conflicts of interest are prevented.

Appeals are handled by individuals not previously involved in the case.

6. Record Keeping and Documentation

The Secretariat maintains records of:

- a) Allegations, complaints & appeals and supporting documentation;
- b) Screening and investigation outcomes;
- c) Decisions and communications;
- d) Corrective action follow-up.

Records are retained in accordance with applicable legal and governance requirements.

7. Timeline Commitments

Fair Rubber e.V. aims to handle allegations, complaints and appeals within a reasonable timeframe, taking into account the complexity and severity of the case.

Where possible:

- Preliminary assessment is conducted within 30 working days;
- Respondents are provided with reasonable response periods;
- Delays are communicated transparently to relevant parties.

8. Review and Continuous Improvement

This Procedure is reviewed periodically to ensure continued alignment with:

- The Allegations, Complaints and Appeals Policy;
- The Constitution of Fair Rubber e.V.;
- System learning and assurance of best practice.

End of Procedure Document