COMPLAINTS AND APPEALS PROCEDURE

Defines how Pando CB receives, investigates, decides and responds to complaints and appeals concerning its certification activities and its certified organizations, per ISO/IEC 17065 §7.13, FSC-STD-20-001 V5-0 §7.13 and §4.6.2, and FSC-PRO-01-008.

01 AT A GLANCE

OWNER	Quality Manager
APPLIES TO	Any interested party, free of charge: complaints against Pando CB, complaints against certified organizations, appeals against certification decisions
KEY STANDARDS	FSC-STD-20-001 V5-0 §7.13, §4.6.2; FSC-PRO-01-008; FSC-POL-01-004
FORMS USED	FO-07-19
REVIEW CYCLE	Annually at Management Review

02 PROCESS FLOW

01	Receive complaint or appeal (any channel); register in FO-07-19 within 2 working days	QUALITY MANAGER
02	Acknowledge in writing within 10 working days reference, process, timeline	CUSTOMER SERVICE

03	Classify case; Director appoints independent investigator or appeal panel; where the case concerns the Director's own decision or the Director is conflicted, the Quality Manager appoints	QUALITY MANAGER / DIRECTOR
04	Investigate: gather evidence, client response; special audit where warranted (PR-07-011)	INVESTIGATOR / PANEL
05	Decide and issue substantiated written final response within 90 days of receipt	/ DIRECTOR DECISION MAKER
06	Inform of escalation routes: ASI, or FSC Dispute Resolution (dispute.resolution@fsc.org)	QUALITY MANAGER
07	Analyse trends; corrective action (PR-09-003); report to Management Review	QUALITY MANAGER

03 COMPLAINTS VS APPEALS

Aspect	Complaint	Appeal
What it is	Dissatisfaction with Pando CB, its personnel/subcontractors, or a certified organization	Request to reconsider a certification decision (refusal, NC grading, suspension, withdrawal, scope reduction)
Who may submit	Any person or organization	The applicant or certified organization concerned
Handled by	Independent investigator; special audit of the certified organization where warranted	Appeal panel; outcome decided by a Decision Maker not involved in the original decision — the backup Certification Decision Maker (Quality Manager) or the Impartiality Committee
Effect on decision	N/A	Appeal does not suspend the appealed decision unless the Director decides otherwise
Typical outcomes	Corrective action (PR-09-003); NCs / suspension of client (PR-07-008, PR-07-013); PfA report to FSC (PR-07-016)	Decision confirmed, amended or reversed

04 KEY RULES

#	RULE
01	This procedure (or an accurate summary) shall be publicly available free of charge on the website, in English and in the official language(s) of each country of operation (FSC-STD-20-001 §4.6.2).
02	Every case is registered in FO-07-19 within 2 working days with a unique reference; matters belonging to another CB or FSC are redirected.
03	Receipt is acknowledged in writing within 10 working days; the complainant is kept informed of progress.
04	Investigators and panel members shall be independent of the subject matter and COI-free (PR-04-004); those who conducted the evaluation or took the appealed decision shall not decide the outcome.
05	A substantiated written final response shall be issued within 90 days of receipt (FSC-PRO-01-008); where more time is objectively required, the party is informed in writing of the reasons and revised date.
06	Alleged Policy for Association violations are additionally handled per PR-07-016 and reported to FSC (dispute.resolution@fsc.org).
07	The final response states the escalation routes: ASI for CB performance, FSC Dispute Resolution for scheme disputes; Pando CB cooperates fully and provides records on request.
08	Where the Director is implicated, the case is referred to the Impartiality Committee.

05 RESPONSIBILITIES

ROLE	RESPONSIBILITY
Quality Manager	Register cases, coordinate investigations, monitor timelines, public availability
Investigator / Appeal panel	Independent investigation and recommendation
Director	Appoint investigators, approve final responses
Technical Dept Head	Initiate special audits of certified organizations
Customer Service	Acknowledgement and communication

06 RECORDS

RECORD	FORM	RETENTION
Complaints and appeals log	FO-07-19	5 years
Case files: submission, investigation, responses, escalation	—	5 years (confidential per PO-08-001)

07 RELATED DOCUMENTS

CODE — TITLE
PO-08-001 — Confidentiality Policy
PR-04-004 — Conflict of Interest Management Procedure
PR-07-008 — Nonconformity Management Procedure
PR-07-011 — Surveillance and Special Audits Procedure
PR-07-016 — Policy for Association Verification Procedure
PR-09-003 — Corrective and Preventive Action Procedure

08 REVISION HISTORY

VERSION	DATE	DESCRIPTION OF CHANGES
01	07 Sep 2026	Initial issue
02	07 Sep 2026	Concise modern rewrite with process diagram
03	09 Sep 2026	Minimalist editorial redesign — content unchanged; process flows re-set as typographic step lists; decorative images removed