



## **Consumer Code of Practice on Complaint Handling and Dispute Resolution**

### **Introduction to our company and services:**

Hive Telecom provides telecoms services to residential customers and businesses. As Hive is a re-seller of telecoms services provided by other telecoms operators and carriers, this code applies solely to the telecoms services under our direct control. This code serves to provide information that details our relationship with our customers.

### **Purpose of this Code of Practice:**

This code informs you about our products, services, and customer care policies. Our code has been approved by Ofcom, the independent regulator for the UK communications industries.

### **How to contact us**

If you wish to order any of our **Residential or Business Services** or require any information about our services, please contact our Customer Services Department on **01256 857000**. The lines are open Monday to Friday 8.30 am to 6.00 pm or email us at [help.uk@hivetelecom.com](mailto:help.uk@hivetelecom.com)

### **Our commitment to you**

We strive to provide our customers with a high quality, value for money, service that they are happy to recommend to their friends and family. To achieve this we need accurate personal information about you. Please help us take prompt and efficient action by informing us of any changes to your personal circumstances by writing to us.

### **Our products and services**

Hive provides a suite of telephone services to our customers. These services can be defined as residential telephone services and business telephone services.

Residential customers can choose to order the service option that best suits their current call behaviour. If their calling patterns change at any point, they can contact the Customer Services Department and request to be switched to the service that better suits their change of requirement.

Hive or its approved representatives can advise its business customers on the service most appropriate to them.

The Customer Services Department can be contacted on **01256 857000**. The lines are open Monday to Friday 8.30 am to 6.00 pm.

There is no requirement for either Residential or Business customers to alter or change their existing telephone number(s) when either opening or closing an account for the Hive telephone service.

### **Customer Services and Business Services**

In dealing with Residential Customers and Business Customers, Hive will: -

- Provide and promote a range of products and services that fulfil customer needs, and to ensure that these are readily understandable
- Treat all customers fairly, openly and honestly



- Provide high standards of service
- Operate an effective complaints processes
- Resolve customer queries to a satisfactory resolution within current Service Level Agreements
- Ensure information held on customers remains strictly confidential, except where the law requires or permits disclosure, or the customer or consultant has given prior written consent
- Ensure all information held for customers is up to date and accurate
- Encourage customer feedback
- Undertake the recording of telephone calls for security purposes, and the monitoring of these under our quality control procedures

### **Phonebook entry**

You have the following choices:

- A published directory entry with your number also available from Directory enquiries.
- No directory entry but your number available from Directory Enquiries.
- No directory entry and your number not available from Directory Enquiries either.

For Calls only customers this service is available from your line provider

### **Call Barring**

The ability to bar certain types of calls from being made from your telephone is available, for further information please call our Customer Services Department on **01256 857000**. The lines are open Monday to Friday 8.30 am to 6.00 pm.

### **Credit Checking**

Hive performs identity checks on all applications to our service. Application details are submitted to an independent credit-checking agency, Equifax, who is bound by legislation and data protection requirements. Hive may with your consent perform Credit Checks or Anti Money Laundering Checks.

The agencies will record details of the search whether or not the application proceeds. Hive may use credit-scoring methods to assess this application and to verify your identity. Credit searches and other information which is provided to us and/or the credit reference agencies, about you and those with whom you are linked financially may be used by Hive and other companies if credit decisions are made about you or those with whom you are financially associated. This information may also be used for debt tracing and the prevention of money laundering as well as the management of your account.

If you have an account with us Hive may give details of your account and how you manage it to credit reference agencies.

The information that Hive and other lenders provide to the credit reference agencies may be used by other organisations to:

- i. Verify your identity if you or your financial associate applies for other facilities including all types of insurance applications and claims
- ii. Make credit decisions about you, your partner, other members of your household or your business.
- iii. Trace your whereabouts and recover payment if you do not make payments that you owe conduct checks for the prevention and detection of crime including fraud and/or money laundering
- iv. Manage your personal, your partner's and/or your business account (if you have one).
- v. Undertake statistical analysis and system testing



We will not refuse an application based on credit status alone. We may refuse an application for reasons such as: -

- An undischarged bankrupt
- Applicants under 18 who are not able legally to enter into a contract with us
- Reasonable grounds to suspect fraud

If you would like a copy of your credit file, please write to the following, enclosing a cheque or postal order for £2. You will need to tell them your full name and address(es) for the last six years.

**Experian Limited**

Consumer Help Service  
PO Box 8000,  
Nottingham,  
NG1 5GX

Alternatively, you may submit your credit file request on-line at [www.experian.co.uk](http://www.experian.co.uk)

**Marketing**

In any customer contact that is of a sales or marketing nature, Hive commits to adhere to the various preference schemes in existence (TPS, MPS, FPS etc.), Direct Marketing Association guidelines and Data Protection Act requirements. Also, we commit to follow the guidelines set by the Advertising Standards Agency (ASA), and the Independent Committee for the Supervision of Standards of Telephone Information Services (ICSTIS).

**Cancellation Procedures**

If, at any time, you decide to cancel your telephone services with Hive you are required to give us 30 days prior notice in writing, except where a service is supplied subject to a minimum period. If you transfer to another service provider and do not provide us with notice before leaving, the 30 day notice period will commence from the date we are contacted by your new service provider or you personally. We will charge you for any service fees or calls made from the date of receipt of cancellation until the actual cancellation date.

**Line Faults (Calls only Service)**

For call packages where Line Rental is provided through another supplier. Initially a call should be placed to Hive Customer Services to ascertain if the fault requires a repair. If so then customers should contact their line provider.

**Line Faults (Calls, Line Rental and Broadband Service)**

All line and broadband faults reported will be logged and issued with a fault reference number which can be used to check for updates. We will endeavour to rectify the reported line fault within 5 working days. However there are some instances that are beyond our control where an appointment is required an engineer must assist in order to resolve the line fault. We will notify you of this request and arrange a suitable time/date. Broadband faults can be reported 7 days a week, 24 hours a day by telephone on **0845 9000 212**

**Compensation and refund policy**

Our policy is to assess any claim for compensation or refunds on a case by case basis.

**Pricing Lists**

Full tariff information can be obtained in one of the following ways: -

**By Internet**

Hive publishes up to date information on the prices of all current services on its website [www.hivetelecom.com](http://www.hivetelecom.com)

**By Phone**

Simply contact our Customer Services Department to request a copy of our full rate card for the service that you are interested in.

**By Post**

You can request a copy of the rate card for any service to be posted to you.

Please write to:

Customer Services Department  
Hive Telecom Ltd  
Global House  
2 Crofton Close  
Lincoln  
LN3 4NT

Please ensure that you provide us with your correct address.

**By Email**

You can request a copy of the rate card for any service to be emailed or posted to you by simply sending an email to [help.uk@hivetelecom.com](mailto:help.uk@hivetelecom.com) clearly stating which rate card you wish to receive and how you would like to receive it. (e.g. by post or by email)

Hive will also advise customers of price changes by including details of such changes in the customer news section of your bill.

**Billing***Payment options*

We strongly recommend customers pay via an automated payment method i.e. Direct Debit.

Direct Debits are collected on or immediately after the 18th of every month and will be confirmed on your bill.

Under the Direct Debit guarantee, customers will be given 5 days advanced notice of any transaction to be made against their Bank account.

Manual payments can also be made over the counter at any Bank or Post Office using the giro slips on the bottom section of the bill. For manual payments please remember to state your customer reference number. Cheques, made payable to Hive Telecom, can also be sent via the post.

**Itemisation**

Hive's billing cycle runs from the 1st of the month through to the last day of the month, regardless of the number of days. Bills are produced on a monthly basis.

All bills are itemised and contain information on the date, time of call, number called, destination, duration detailed in hrs:mins:secs and the call charge.

Customers will receive their bills around the 8th of each month or soon after.

All calls are billed to the nearest minute, and charges rounded up to the nearest penny. For calls lasting less than 60 seconds duration our low rate minimum call charge will be applied, unless the call forms part of a free call allocation on one of our packages.



For your convenience and quick reference calls are broken down on the bill into the following categories: -

Local,  
National,  
International  
and other calls.

Any monthly service charges or credits applicable are shown under “Monthly Charges”.

**Peak Times/Daytime**

Monday to Friday 7.00am – 7.00pm

**Weekend**

Friday Midnight to Sunday Midnight

**Off Peak/Evenings**

All other times

Failure to pay bills on time may result in loss of any free call entitlement or late payment charges.

Customers can also access their bill on-line by registering on to the Hive on-line bill service. For more details please visit **[www.hivetelecom.com](http://www.hivetelecom.com)**

If you have any queries relating to your bill please contact our Customer Services Department on: **01256 857000** or e-mail: **[help.uk@hivetelecom.com](mailto:help.uk@hivetelecom.com)**

**Disconnections Process**

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

- If you are found to have given incorrect or incomplete information when you applied for the service
- If you break or are in breach of your contractual agreement with us, or if we believe that your service is being used in a way forbidden by your contractual agreement
- If you break or are in breach of the fair use or acceptable use policy
- If you fail to pay your telephone bill
- If we are obliged to do so in order to comply with an order, instruction or request of government, an emergency service organisation or other 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 your service immediately to avoid the build up of further debt
- We can contact you and establish the reasons for this abnormal usage. We reserve the right to prosecute in all cases of fraud.

Upon the termination or suspension of the service all amounts you owe us for use of the services shall become due and payable in full on demand and you will have no right to withhold or set off any such amounts.



### **Erroneous Disconnection**

If your service is suspended because of an error on our part, then you will be reconnected without penalty.

### **Debt Collection**

We will pass details of the outstanding amount to a Debt Collections Agency to collect on our behalf. The Debt Collections Agencies are licensed by the Office of Fair Trading to undertake this work.

### **If you are moving home or office**

Please call our Customer Services Department on **01256 857000** to advise us you are moving home to arrange for your Hive service to be set up at your new home. The lines are open Monday to Friday 8.30 am to 6.00 pm.

A final bill can be sent to you if it is not possible to provide the telephone service at your new address.

### **Number Portability**

The Hive Telephone Service, in normal circumstance, can only be provided to customers who have a BT landline, as our service operates over the BT Network. As such there is no requirement to change telephone number(s) when taking the Hive Telephone Service.

### **Complaint and Dispute Handling Process**

We make every effort to ensure that our customers are happy with the level of service, and the products and services they receive from us. However, despite our best efforts, things can go wrong. We take customer complaints very seriously and aim to resolve them quickly and efficiently.

The following information advises you on how to contact us in the event that you have a complaint.

If you are a Residential or Business Customer please contact our Customer Services Department on **01256 857000**. The lines are open Monday to Friday 8.30 am to 6.00 pm.

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.

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

Complaints Department,  
Hive Telecom Ltd,  
Global House  
2 Crofton Close  
Lincoln  
LN3 4NT

Or you can e-mail us at [help.uk@hivetelecom.com](mailto:help.uk@hivetelecom.com)

Please ensure that you provide us with your correct address, and your customer reference number.



**Stage 1 – How to contact us:**

If you are unhappy with any of our products or services you may send your complaint to us in writing to:

**GCI Com  
Customer Service Department  
Global House  
2 Crofton Close  
Lincoln  
LN3 4NT**

An initial response to you will be sent within 10 working days.

**Stage 2 – If you are not satisfied:**

If you are not satisfied with the proposed course of action, you should request that your complaint is referred to the Customer Service Manager. You will receive further written response from the Customer Service Manager with 10 working days.

**Stage 3 – If you are still unhappy:**

If you are still unsatisfied with the proposed plan of action and wish to escalate your complaint further, you need to write in to the address below to request escalation of your complaint to the ADR Scheme Liaison Manager

**ADR Scheme Liaison Manager  
PO Box 1180  
Lincoln  
LN5 5JN**

You will receive a further written response within 10 working days.  
If we cannot resolve the problem, we will write to you to say so

Depending on the individual complaint it may not be possible to resolve every complaint within these timeframes. If we are unable to resolve your complaint within the timeframes, we will keep you regularly informed throughout the process and inform you of the length of time we expect it to take to investigate and resolve. We will notify you of the resolution of each complaint and retain records of your complaint for a period of not less than one year.

**Alternative Dispute Resolution Procedure**

Any unresolved complaint may be referred to CISAS 8 weeks after first making the complaint in writing to Hive Telecom Ltd, or if you have been issued with a letter from Hive Telecom Ltd saying the issue has reached “deadlock”.

Hive Telecom Ltd is a member of CISAS, and as such is obliged to respond to CISAS and accept their decision on complaints. Your referral can be made to CISAS by post, e-mail or telephone. Contact details are: -

**CISAS  
24 Angel Gate  
City Road  
London  
EC1V 2PT**

Telephone - 02075203827

We endeavour to avoid the above by attempting to proactively resolve any disputes without any external intervention.



### **Social Responsibility**

We view the problem of malicious calls very seriously and will work closely with the police and the telephone industry to tackle it. Please call the Malicious Calls Bureau on 150 to report any calls, and for information on how to deal with the situation.

### **Services for Disabled and Elderly Customers**

If you are older or may have a disability and wish to discuss any special telecoms requirements you may have please call one of our advisors who will be pleased to take details of your requirements and we will try to accommodate these where possible. Lines are open Monday to Friday 8.30 am to 6.00 pm **01256 857000** This Code of Practice can be provided in large print.

### **Data Protection**

Hive has a legal obligation under the Data Protection Act 1998 to ensure that all information held and processed about you complies with the principles of the Act. Hive is committed to protecting your privacy. We use the information we collect about you to process orders and to ensure we provide our customers with a more individual experience. We may also use it to tell you about additional services or about special offers we think you'll find interesting and could save you money. We do not sell, trade or rent your personal information to others.

In signing our standard Terms and Condition for the Hive Service our customers agree to the following: -

- We may search the files of a credit reference agency which will keep a record of that details of how an account is conducted may also be disclosed to the agency. The information may be used by other lenders in assessing applications from other members for occasional debit tracing and fraud prevention.
- We may retain and process the personal information given to us including information relating name, address, and other details for purposed including marketing, business
- Creation and development, management reporting and communication both manually and/or on a computer database and we will be the data controller for this information.
- We may disclose this information to other members of the Hive group of companies (which may be situated inside or outside the European Economic Area) and Hive sales partners working under our direct instructions.

### **For our Business Customer**

The Data Protection Act does not apply to companies in themselves, but it does extend to sole traders and partnerships. When an application is received from a business, in addition to the above information, information may be sought from credit reference agencies on the company director and/or partners as individuals.

### **Useful Contact Information**

**CISAS:  
24 Angel Gate  
City Road  
London  
EC1V 2PT**

Telephone - 02075203827





Web: [www.cisas.org](http://www.cisas.org)

*The Office of Communications (Ofcom)*

Ofcom is the regulator for the UK communications industries, with responsibilities across television, radio, Telecoms and wireless communications services.

For consumers resident in England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland: -

Office of Communications Riverside House

2a Southwark Bridge Road

London

SE1 9HA

Tel: 0300 123 3333 or 020 7981 3040

Fax: 0845 456 3333

Email: [contact@ofcom.org.uk](mailto:contact@ofcom.org.uk)

Web: [www.ofcom.org.uk](http://www.ofcom.org.uk)

The Independent Committee for the Supervision of Standards of Telephone Information Services (ICSTIS)

ICSTIS investigates complaints about any promotions or services using a telephone connection (including internet and interactive TV) to make a premium rate call. ICSTIS also deals with complaints about premium-rate services, including those offering directory enquiries. You can check premium-rate phone numbers which appear on your bill to see the name and address of the service dialled by entering the number in the look-up service of ICSTIS website.

ICSTIS

FREEPOST

WC 5468

London SE1 2BR

Tel: 0800 500 212

Fax: 020 7940 7546

E-mail [helpline@icstis.org.uk](mailto:helpline@icstis.org.uk)

Web: [www.icstis.org.uk](http://www.icstis.org.uk)

### **Telephone Preference Service (TPS)**

The service that helps to make sure that your telephone number is not available to organisations that may contact you with offers and information that you do not wish to receive.

DMA House

70 Margaret Street London

W1 W 8SS

You can register by either:

- Calling 0845 070 0707
- Fax 0845 070 0706
- E-mail [tps@dma.org.uk](mailto:tps@dma.org.uk)
- or visiting [www.tpsonline.org.uk](http://www.tpsonline.org.uk)

### **Fax Preference Service (FPS)**

Businesses are able to register their fax numbers on FPS to ensure that they do not receive any direct marketing messages.



DMA House  
70 Margaret Street  
London  
W1 W 8SS

You can register by either:

- Calling 0845 070 0702
- Fax 0845 070 0705
- E-mail [fps@dma.org.uk](mailto:fps@dma.org.uk)
- Or visiting [www.fpsonline.org.uk](http://www.fpsonline.org.uk)

### **Mail Preference Service**

The Mail Preference Service (MPS) is designed to assist in decreasing the amount of national non-profit or commercial mail received at home.

You can register by either:

Calling 020 7291 330

or visit [www.mpsonline.org.uk](http://www.mpsonline.org.uk)

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