



QMARK INTERNATIONAL CERTIFICATIONS PRIVATE LIMITED

COMPLAINTS AND APPEALS HANDLING PROCESS

QICPL follows a clear step-by-step process for handling complaints, disputes and appeals in a fair and timely manner. This process is implemented as per QICPL procedures for complaints, disputes and appeals.

A. Complaint Handling Process

Step 1: Submission of Complaint

- Any person (farmer, operator, stakeholder or public) can submit a complaint in writing or by email at gmarkcertifications@gmail.com.

Step 2: Acknowledgement

- QICPL will acknowledge the complaint **within 48 hours** of receipt.

Step 3: Recording and Review

- The complaint is recorded in the complaint register.
- QICPL checks whether the complaint relates to its certification activities.

Step 4: Investigation

- The Quality Manager investigates the complaint and prepares a report.
- If required, an Investigation Committee may be formed.
- The Investigation Committee submits its report **within 30 days**.

Step 5: Decision

- The CEO reviews the investigation report and takes a decision independently.

Step 6: Action and Communication

- Necessary corrective actions are taken (if required).
- The complainant is informed about the decision and actions taken.

Special Case:

- In case of complaints affecting organic integrity (e.g., export rejection), QICPL informs APEDA **within 7 days**.

B. Appeal Handling Process

(If a client disagrees with certification decision)

Step 1: Submission of Appeal

- Appeal must be submitted in writing **within 30 days** of receiving the decision.

Step 2: Acknowledgement

- QICPL acknowledges the appeal **within 7 calendar days**.

Step 3: Completeness Check

- If any information is missing, the applicant must provide it **within 7 days**.



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Step 4: Review by Appeal Committee

- The appeal is reviewed by an independent Appeal and Dispute Resolution Committee.
- Persons involved in the original decision are not involved in the appeal.

Step 5: Decision Timeline

- The appeal is normally decided **within 60 days** of receipt.
- If delayed, the applicant is informed with reasons and revised timeline.

Step 6: Communication of Decision

- The decision is communicated in writing to the applicant.

C. Second Appeal (If Not Satisfied)

- A second appeal can be made to NAB/APEDA **within 30 days** of QICPL's decision.
- NAB/APEDA generally decides the case **within 90 days**.

D. Dispute Handling (If Applicable)

- Disputes are acknowledged **within 7 days**.
- Initial assessment is done **within 7 days**.
- Disputes are generally resolved **within 45 days**.

Important Points

- All complaints and appeals are handled impartially.
- Persons involved in original decisions are not involved in review.
- Confidentiality is maintained at all stages.
- All records are maintained for reference and review.