

## **INTRODUCTION**

This code sets out the standards which the Bank will follow while providing credit and other services to customers under personal segment. It is based on the Code of Best Practice on Consumer Credit and Charging prescribed by the Central Bank of Bahrain. This Code shall not have any legal implications and the provisions of the Code shall be subject to the rules of the CBB Rule Book.

## **APPLICATION**

The code applies to:

- all types of credit such as loans, overdrafts etc.
- any type of financial product creating a creditor – debtor relationship between the bank and the customer
- any other financial service for which the Bank charges a fee

## **PRINCIPAL COMMITMENTS**

Advertising and promotional literature relating to consumer loans, credit and charges shall be clear and not misleading in any way.

Clear information about products and services, including the application procedures, terms & conditions, interest rates and break up of charges shall be provided to the customers.

Customers shall be provided with regular statements, at least every six months. Any change in interest rate, charges or terms & conditions shall be intimated in writing (by letter or electronically) at recorded addresses prior to the change.

Customers in genuine financial difficulty shall be dealt with sympathetically and confidentiality of customers' personal information shall be maintained.

## **CUSTOMER GUIDANCE**

New / Potentially new customers shall be provided with transparent and factual information on the key features and benefits of the product(s) they are interested in.

Customers shall be advised on the various delivery channels of products and sources for additional information on the products.

Once a customer selects a product, he/she shall be provided with full details of the product.

## **INTEREST RATES**

Consumers, when they are contemplating buying a product or at any time they ask, shall be informed as to how and where they can find information about interest rates.

Consumers shall be provided with written information about the initial interest rates applicable on the product, periodicity and due date for payment of interest.

Method of calculation of interest shall be explained to the consumers clearly.

Annual percentage rate of interest (APR) shall be publicized in the Bank premises and in the schedule of charges and bring it to the attention of new customers.

Customers shall be informed, in an effective manner, of any changes in interest rates before they take effect.

Any change in interest rate shall be published in the Bank website and branch premises within two working days. Old and new rates shall be furnished to facilitate comparison.

### **LENDING / FINANCING**

Repaying capacity of the customer shall be assessed by the Bank, based on available information on the customer's financial position, before providing any credit facility.

If any credit facility, such as overdraft, is repayable on demand, the fact shall be made clear to the customer.

The Bank shall comply with the Guidelines of the Central Bank of Bahrain on consumer finance.

### **CHARGES**

Customers shall be provided with details of charges such as Administration / arrangement fees, Pre-payment charges, Default interest rates, Insurance charges etc. applicable to the product they intend to purchase.

Customers shall be advised of sources for information on charges (eg.looking at the website, asking staff etc.)

Introduction of any new charge or increase in existing charges shall be advised to the customer before the new/increased charge takes effect. If the customer does not accept the new / increased charge, he/she shall be given the option of terminating the relationship within 15 days of application of the charge. If the customer does not terminate the relationship within the 15 days, it will be deemed as accepted.

Customers shall be provided with details of charges both before a product or service is provided and at any time the customer asks for.

All charges shall be reasonable and justifiable for the product / service provided.

### **FINANCIAL DIFFICULTIES**

The Bank shall endeavor to discuss financial difficulties with the customers before initiating legal proceedings.

Wherever possible, the Bank shall consider alternative arrangements to enable customers to overcome their repayment difficulties.

The Bank shall provide customers with a minimal level of counseling on debt problems.

### **COMPLAINTS**

The Bank shall have a formal Customer Complaints Procedures (Annexure-1). The procedures relating to 'How and Where to Complain' will be made available to all customers. Further, a Customer Complaints Officer shall be appointed and his/her contact details shall be publicized in the Branch website and Bank premises.

Customers shall be advised in writing about the Customer Complaint Handling Procedures.

Complaints received in writing from customers shall be acknowledged in writing within five working days of receipt.

All complaints received from customers will be recorded in a Register against running Serial number and Date. A copy of all communication related to the complaints will be maintained in a file and will be preserved till the period prescribed in Record Retention Policy.

The Bank shall, within four weeks of written acknowledgement to the customer, respond in writing explaining the Bank's position and the corrective steps being proposed / taken. The customer shall be advised how to take the complaint further within the organization, if he/she is not satisfied with the Bank's response.

In the event of Bank's failure to resolve the complaint, the customer shall be advised of the options available to him/her to pursue the matter further, including, where appropriate, referring the matter to the Consumer Protection Unit / Compliance Directorate at the Central Bank of Bahrain.

### **MONITORING**

The Customer Complaints Officer shall monitor Bank's adherence to the Code.

The Customer Complaints Officer shall submit a report on Bank's adherence to the Code to the Central Bank of Bahrain, if called for.

Provisions of the Code shall be made known to all the members of the staff and the Bank shall ensure that all concerned are fully familiar with the Code.

Copies of the Code shall be made available to the customers and notices shall be displayed in the Bank premises regarding availability of the Code.

## Annexure 1

### **CUSTOMER COMPLAINT PROCEDURES**

The customer who intend to register a complaint shall be guided by the following procedures. A simple and easy-to-use guide to the procedures shall be made available to all customers, on request, and when they want to make a complaint.

#### **I) WHO CAN MAKE A COMPLAINT**

A complaint can be made by the account holder of SBI Retail Branch Bahrain [RBB] only. The identity of the complainant must be established to treat the complaint as valid.

In cases, where customer is unable to directly contact the branch for making a complaint, he may authorize a third party to do so, however, the facility will be restricted to written complaints only. All such authorizations need to be produced along with the complaint to treat them valid complaints. The Identity of the complainant and authorized third party must be identified prior to treating the complaint as valid.

#### **II) HOW A COMPLAINT CAN BE MADE**

- a) A written complaint duly signed by the complainant can be sent by post/ courier to the Branch address.
- b) A complaint can be made in writing by visiting the Branch.
- c) A complaint can be made electronically through Email.

#### **III) WHERE OR TO WHOM A COMPLAINT CAN BE MADE**

1. A complaint can be made in writing through Post/ Courier addressed to:  
**State Bank of India, Retail Branch, Diplomat City Tower II, Diplomatic Area, P O Box 10763, Manama, Bahrain.**

2. The complainant can also **visit the Branch** and approach any Customer Service staff of RBB with an intention to make a complaint.

3. A complaint can be made electronically through Email also. Written complaints shall be emailed to Branch on **customercare.rbbh@statebank.com**.

The complaint must be sent using the registered Email address of the customer. The Email must contain clear indication to register a complaint.

A customer can contact the Branch on the Branch telephone numbers -17548033 (Main Branch) & 17009420 (Bal Al Bahrain Branch) for any query or concerns related to any products or services of the Branch. Such cases will not be treated as a complaint by the Branch. However, Branch will give utmost priority to all customer queries / concerns and

provide the customer with a satisfactory resolution. In case the customer is not satisfied by the Branch explanation and/or the concern is not resolved, he/she shall submit a written complaint by visiting the branch, or by sending an email and/or by sending via post/courier.

#### **IV) RESPONSE TO A COMPLAINT**

Acknowledgement to customer complaints will be handed over immediately in case of complaints through personal Interview. Written Complaints submitted to Branch, received through post/ courier and by emails will be acknowledged within 5 working days.

Branch will respond in writing to a customer complaint within 4 weeks of receiving the complaint, explaining their position and how they propose to deal with the complaint.

#### **V) WHOM TO APPROACH FOR REDRESSAL**

Complaints handling and resolution process at Branch level normally does not need follow-ups by complainant. However, a complainant can be guided by the following for checking the status of complaint:

The first point of redressal of customer complaints shall be the **Branch Customer Complaints Officer**.

The contact particulars of the Branch Customer Complaints Officer is as under:

**Vice President (Systems)**

**SBI, Retail Branch Bahrain**

**Email: [syscomp.rbbh@statebank.com](mailto:syscomp.rbbh@statebank.com)**

**Tel: 17531064**

**Diplomat City Tower II, Diplomatic Area, Road 1708, Block 317, Kingdom of Bahrain.**

#### **Vi) What to do if customer is not satisfied about the resolution?**

If the complainant is not satisfied with the terms of redress offered by the Branch, the complainant will have following avenues or further escalation upon request.

1. The first alternate avenue for resolution of a complaint will be the **Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of the Branch**.

The contact particulars of the CEO is as under:

**Chief Executive Officer**

**Email: [ceo.rbbh@statebank.com](mailto:ceo.rbbh@statebank.com)**

**Tel: 17531338**

**Diplomat City Tower II, Diplomatic Area, Road 1708, Block 317, Kingdom of Bahrain.**

2. Further, customer may also contact the **Regional Head (MEWANA) of State Bank of India located in Dubai** under whose administrative control the Branch functions.

The contact particulars of the Regional Head can be obtained from the Branch.

3. In the event that branch is unable to resolve a complaint, and or the complainant is not satisfied by the Branch resolution of the complaint, the customer may pursue the matter further, where appropriate by referring the matter to the **Consumer Protection Unit at the CBB.**

**CUSTOMER COMPLAINT ESCALATION MATRIX:**

<b>Escalation Level 1 - Branch</b>	<b>Branch Customer Complaints Officer</b>
<b>Escalation Level 2 - Branch</b>	<b>Branch Chief Executive Officer</b>
<b>Escalation Level 3 – Branch Regional Head Office</b>	<b>Regional Head (MEWANA), Dubai, UAE</b>
<b>Escalation - CBB</b>	<b>Consumer Protection Unit at CBB</b>

**STATE BANK OF INDIA, RETAIL BRANCH BAHRAIN  
CUSTOMER COMPLAINT FORM**

<b>Customer Type</b>	<b>Existing Customer</b> <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Not a Customer</b> <input type="checkbox"/> <b>(Tick whichever is applicable)</b>
<b>Name</b>	
<b>Tel / Mobile No</b>	
<b>Address</b>	
<b>Account No(If a customer)</b>	
<b>Product / Service about which the complaint is</b>	
<b>Details of Complaint</b>	

**Signature of Complainant**

**Date:**