

Making a complaint about our services

Guidance on raising a complaint about service standards in the Commission



The Charity Commission for Northern Ireland

The Charity Commission for Northern Ireland is the regulator of charities in Northern Ireland, a non-departmental public body sponsored by the Department for Social Development.

Our vision

To deliver in partnership with other key stakeholders in the charitable sector “a dynamic and well governed charities sector in which the public has confidence, underpinned by the Commission’s effective delivery of its regulatory and advisory role”.

Further information about our aims and activities is available on our website www.charitycommissionni.org.uk

Equality

The Charity Commission for Northern Ireland is committed to equality and diversity in all that we do.

Accessibility

If you have any accessibility requirements please contact us.

Introduction

The Charity Commission for Northern Ireland is committed to ensuring that:

- a)** everyone availing of its services will be treated professionally and with courtesy, and
- b)** those services will be delivered effectively and efficiently.

Whilst this is our aim we recognise that occasionally service standards can fall short of expectations. Should that happen we want to know about it so we can, as appropriate, rectify the situation.

This leaflet explains what to do if you, as a user of our services, believe that the quality of those services was not acceptable or that you were dealt with unprofessionally or discourteously.

Please remember that you can only use this procedure to complain about the quality of service that you have received from the Commission and not to challenge any decision or other action taken by the Commission in exercise of its statutory duties and powers.

Raising a complaint about service standards in the Commission

If you believe that:

- i. the quality of service extended to you by the Commission in its dealing with you was less than acceptable; or
- ii. that you were dealt with unprofessionally or discourteously

then you should take the following steps:

1. In the first instance you should speak to the member(s) of staff of the Commission with whom you were dealing to see if the difficulty can be resolved informally.
2. If, having spoken to the member(s) of staff concerned, you remain dissatisfied then please fill out a *Complaints about our Services* form and return it to the Commission's Complaints Co-ordinator using the contact details at the end of this leaflet.
3. You **must** submit your complaint **within three months** of the incident you are dissatisfied with taking place.
4. Your complaint will be investigated by our Complaints Co-ordinator who will aim to respond to you within 10 working days or as soon as reasonably practicable. The decision will be communicated to you in writing.
5. If, having received the decision of the Complaints Co-ordinator, you remain dissatisfied then you may make further representation to the Chief Executive. You should do so within five days of receiving the written decision of the Complaints Co-ordinator.

6. The Chief Executive will aim to respond to you within 10 working days or as soon as reasonably practicable. This decision will be communicated to you in writing.
7. The decision of the Chief Executive represents the final stage of consideration within the Commission. However, please note that if your complaint relates to the Chief Executive of the Commission, the matter should be marked for the attention of the Chief Commissioner, for consideration in the first instance. This will also represent the final stage of consideration within the Commission.
8. Should you remain dissatisfied with the outcome you can consider making a complaint to the Northern Ireland Commissioner for Complaints, who may be contacted at:

Telephone: 028 9023 3821

Text phone: 028 9089 7789

Email: ombudsman@ni-ombudsman.org.uk

Freephone: 0800 34 34 24

Via Post:

The Ombudsman
Freepost BEL 1478
Belfast
BT1 6BR

OR

The Ombudsman
33 Wellington Place
Belfast
BT1 6HN

Our commitment to you

We will keep all complaints confidential.

We treat all our stakeholders fairly and equally, regardless of religious belief, gender, disability, race, political opinion, age, marital status or sexual orientation.

If you have submitted a complaint to us, we will use the information you have provided during consideration and assessment of your complaint. We may give copies of all or some of this information to individuals and organisations we consult when assessing complaints, for example legal counsel.

The Commission keeps a record of each complaint it receives, which supports our ongoing evaluation and learning processes.

The number of complaints received is also reported in the Commission's quarterly Corporate Performance Reports. However, we recognise the need to maintain the confidentiality of complainants and their details will not be made public in any way, except as required by law, or if you have given us permission.

Further information on our activities is available from:

**Charity Commission for
Northern Ireland
257 Lough Road
Lurgan
Craigavon
BT66 6NQ**

www.charitycommissionni.org.uk



Email: admin@charitycommissionni.org.uk

Tel: 028 3832 0220

Fax: 028 3834 5943

TextPhone: 028 3834 7639

 **Follow us on Twitter @CharityCommNI**

This document is available in large print or other formats on request