



Complaints Procedure

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Date of Review	Update to policy
November 2018	Updated to include new practice
April 2018	Updated to reflect new practice
June 2017	Reviewed to ensure process meets current staffing structure and stages of escalation are appropriate.

1. Introduction

- 1.1. The Commission for Victims and Survivors is committed to providing the best possible service to the people with whom we have contact, and acknowledges the need to address any dissatisfaction that a partner organisation or any other stakeholder may have with any aspect of that service.

2. Definition of a Complaint

- 2.1. A complaint is an expression of dissatisfaction which requires a response.
- 2.2. If you have a complaint you should bring it to the attention of the Commission and we will try to resolve the issue quickly.
- 2.3. Your complaint can be relating to;
 - the Commission
 - a member of Commission staff
 - a member of the Victims and Survivors Forum
- 2.4. Where the complaint is about an individual within the Commission, that individual will not be responsible for overseeing the investigation.
- 2.5. In the first instance the Commission will work with you, and any other involved party, to informally resolve the issue.
- 2.6. If you still feel dissatisfied after this attempt to deal with your complaint, you may initiate the Commission's Formal Complaints Procedure, as follows:

3. Stage 1

- 3.1. If your complaint is about the Commission, or a member of Commission staff, then, in the first instance it is recommended that you contact the Commission. Please provide as much information about your complaint as possible, along with your contact details (name, address and telephone number).
- 3.2. We have a legal duty to protect any information you provide to us. We will handle appropriately any personal data you provide in accordance with the General Data Protection Regulation (EU) 2016/679 ("GDPR").

3.3. Please send your complaint by letter or email to:

Complaints
Commission for Victims and Survivors
4th Floor Equality House
7-9 Shaftesbury Square
Belfast
BT2 7DP

Email: commission@cvsni.org

Alternatively you can contact the Commission by telephone on (t) 028 9031 1000

- 3.4. The Commission will acknowledge your complaint within 3 working days of receipt and will issue a response within 10 working days, following an investigation. If a response is not possible within this time we will let you know the reason why and when you can expect a response.
- 3.5. If your complaint is upheld, you will receive explanation report detailing the outcome. If your complaint is not upheld, we will provide an explanation report with our reasons for rejecting your complaint.
- 3.6. If your complaint is about an individual or group outside the Commission you are advised to proceed straight to Stage 2 of this process.

4. Stage 2

- 4.1. If you are not satisfied with our response, or you wish to proceed to Stage 2, you can ask for your complaint to be reviewed by the Commissioner or the Chief Executive Officer. Depending on the nature of your complaint, the Commission will refer it to the Commissioner, or the Chief Executive Officer, to review.
- 4.2. You should write to the Commission at the above address, again giving as much information as possible. Alternatively you can contact the Commission by telephone on 028 9031 1000.
- 4.3. The Commissioner or the Chief Executive Officer will review your complaint and notify you of the outcome within the timescales set out in Stage 1.
- 4.4. If your complaint is about the Commissioner or the Chief Executive Officer the investigation will be undertaken, and the outcome of your complaint will be determined, by the Chair of the Audit and Risk Assurance Committee.

5. Further Information

5.1. Our Complaints Procedure is not a substitute for your right to complain to the Northern Ireland Public Services Ombudsman Office. You should note, however, that the Ombudsman will generally expect you to have used all the steps of the Commission's Formal Complaints Procedure before considering your complaint.

5.2. You can submit a complaint to the Ombudsman in any of the following ways:

In person: The Ombudsman's Office
 Progressive House
 33 Wellington Place
 Belfast
 BT1 6HN

By post: The Ombudsman
 Freepost
 Belfast
 BT1 6BR
 (no stamp required)

By phone: Freephone 0800 343 424

By Fax: (028) 9023 4912

By Email: ombudsman@ni-ombudsman.org.uk

Website: <https://nipso.org.uk/>

5.3. The website explains how to make a complaint and you can download a complaint form or fill in an on-line form.

6. Monitoring

6.1. We routinely monitor our complaints procedure to ensure that it is fair and appropriate.

6.2. We may therefore contact you shortly after your complaint is dealt with, no matter what the outcome is, to seek your views on how we handled your complaint.