



# What to do if you are not happy with a government service

Easy  
Read

## About this leaflet

We are the Parliamentary and Health Service Ombudsman.

We help to sort out complaints when people are not happy with:

- a government department or organisation
- some public organisations.



There are lots of government and public organisations, like:

- The DVLA. They are to do with driving cars and other things
- The Tax Office (HM Revenue and Customs). They are to do with paying tax
- JobCentre Plus. They help with jobs and benefits.



jobcentreplus



There is a list of organisations like this on our website:

[www.ombudsman.org.uk/making-complaint/what-we-can-and-cant-help/government-organisations-we-can-investigate](http://www.ombudsman.org.uk/making-complaint/what-we-can-and-cant-help/government-organisations-we-can-investigate)



This leaflet tells you:

- what to do if you are not happy with one of these organisations
- who can help.

## What to do if you are not happy with a government organisation



You need to tell the organisation what you are unhappy about first.

This is called **making a complaint**.



It is fine to make a complaint. It can help you and the organisation.

# How to make your complaint

## 1. Talk to staff from the organisation.

Ask them:

- how to make a complaint
- how long it will take them to reply.

They may say you can:

- talk to someone about the problem
- write to them
- fill in a form.

Say if you find it hard to read or write. There may be other ways to complain.

It may also help to talk to the person you are unhappy with first.

This may solve the problem.





## 2. Think about what you want to say when you make your complaint.

You need to say:

- what happened
- when it happened
- where it happened
- who you want to complain about
- what problems it has caused you
- what you want the organisation to do



For example, do you want them to say sorry or something else?

Also tell the organisation how to get in touch with you.



The organisation may give you a number for your complaint.

It is called a **reference number**.

If you have a number like this, write it down with your complaint.



**3. Make your complaint as soon as possible.**

This can help to sort out your problem quickly.



**4. Keep a copy of letters or emails about your complaint.**

Also keep a note of who is looking at your complaint and the job they do.

You may need this information later.

## 5. Talk to us if you are unhappy with the way the organisation looked at your complaint.



We may be able to help.

We can only help if the organisation has finished looking at your complaint.



Tell us as soon as you can after this.

Phone us on 0345 015 4033.

Email us at:

[phso.enquiries@ombudsman.org.uk](mailto:phso.enquiries@ombudsman.org.uk)



Or look at our website at:

[www.ombudsman.org.uk](http://www.ombudsman.org.uk)





## 6. Find an MP to complain to us for you.



If you want us to look at your complaint, you need to find an MP who can complain to us for you.

An MP is someone who speaks up for people in your local area.



You can find your local MP on this website:

[www.parliament.uk](http://www.parliament.uk)



Look for where it says **Members of the House of Commons.**

Then type in your postcode and click **Find.**

## Help you can get



You may want some help to make your complaint.

You can get help from:

1. Someone you know and trust.
2. A group called **Citizens Advice**.



They give people advice about the law and other things.



You can find a Citizens Advice place near you on this website:

[www.citizensadvice.org.uk](http://www.citizensadvice.org.uk)



3. Or phone us on 0345 015 4033.

We can tell you who may be able to help.