

# Our Service Charter

We make final decisions on complaints that have not been resolved by the NHS in England, UK government departments and some other UK public organisations.

Our Service Charter explains what you can expect from us when you ask us to look into a complaint. This is to give you confidence in our service. It also explains what we need from you in return.



---

## Contact us

You can get a detailed description of what happens at each step in our complaints process from our website at [www.ombudsman.org.uk](http://www.ombudsman.org.uk) or by calling us on 0345 015 4033.

Please let us know if you would like our Charter in a different format, including Easyread, Daisy or large print.

---

## Our commitments

### Giving you the information you need

We will:

1. explain our role and what we can and cannot do
2. explain how we handle complaints and what information we need from you
3. direct you to someone who can help with your complaint if we are unable to, where possible
4. keep you regularly updated on our progress with your complaint

---

### Following an open and fair process

We will:

5. listen to you to make sure we understand your complaint
6. explain the specific concerns we will be looking into
7. explain how we will do our work
8. gather all the information we need, including from you and the organisation you have complained about, before we make our decision
9. share facts with you, and discuss with you what we are seeing
10. evaluate the information we've gathered and make an impartial decision on your complaint
11. explain our decision and recommendations, and how we reached them

---

### Giving you a good service

We will:

12. treat you with courtesy and respect
13. give you a final decision on your complaint as soon as we can
14. make sure our service is easily accessible to you and give you support and help if you need it
15. look after the information you give us

---

### Living up to our commitments

We will:

16. listen to your feedback and use it to improve our service
17. apologise if we make mistakes, and put things right
18. publish information regularly on our website about our performance, in line with the commitments in this Charter, and report to Parliament on this

# Helping to make public services better for everyone

## We will:

- help Parliament to scrutinise the organisations we investigate by sharing what we have learned from the complaints we see
  - help the organisations we investigate, regulators and others to improve public services by sharing this learning with them
  - promote and share good practice whenever we see it
- .....

# What we expect from you when you complain to us

## We need you to:

- complain to the organisation you are unhappy with first, so it has a chance to put things right
  - treat our staff with courtesy and respect
  - give us all the information we ask for in a reasonable amount of time
  - tell us if you have any particular needs that we should be aware of
  - understand that we may not always be able to give you the outcome you are looking for
  - appreciate that we carry out our investigations in a way that is fair to everyone involved in the complaint and have to decide what questions and evidence are relevant to the complaint
- .....

# What we expect from organisations complained about

## We need organisations to:

- give people a clear final answer to their complaint
- make people aware of our service when giving them a final answer
- treat people who make a complaint, and our staff, with courtesy and respect
- work with us to address the complaints people bring to us as quickly and effectively as possible
- give us all the information we ask for in a reasonable amount of time
- show people who have made a complaint, and us, how they have acted on our recommendations

