

Public Services Ombudsman for Wales

How to comment or complain about our service *or* request a review of a decision we have taken

The Ombudsman and his staff aim to provide a first class Ombudsman service for Wales. As part of that commitment we aim to:

- provide an accessible, simple, effective and transparent process for looking into complaints about the service we give;
- respond quickly to complaints about the service we have provided; and,
- if we have got things wrong or given poor service, apologise and learn from our mistakes.

We want to hear your comments about the service we have provided.

You can also use this form to ask for a review of a decision we have made not to investigate, to discontinue an investigation or where you consider that the decisions we have made following investigation are flawed. **You must have new evidence, or show that we did not consider specific evidence that was available, or we will not be able to deal with your review request. We cannot review a decision simply because you disagree with it.**

Have you submitted your complaint to us yet?

If you are approaching us for a service for the first time, then this policy doesn't apply. You should first allow us to respond to your request. If you make a request for a service and then are not happy with our response, you will be able to make your concern known as we describe below.

Informal resolution

If possible, we believe it's best to deal with things straight away rather than try to sort them out later. If you have a concern, please raise it with the officer you're dealing with. He or she will try to resolve it for you, there and then. If the member of staff can't help, they will explain why and you can then ask for a formal investigation.

What if I need help?

Our staff will aim to help you make your concerns known to us. If you need extra assistance, we will try to put you in touch with someone who can help.

This policy does not apply if the matter relates to a Freedom of Information or Data Protection decision. In these circumstances, you should contact the Ombudsman's Management Information Officer at the Ombudsman's office. email Information.Request@ombudsman-wales.org.uk or write to Public Services Ombudsman for Wales, 1 Ffordd yr Hen Gae, Pencoed. CF35 5LJ

Copies of this policy and the complaint form are available in Welsh and English, and can be provided in audio or large print format.

You can use this policy and the attached form

	To comment on, or complaint about, our service	To request a review of a decision we have taken
<p>For example</p>	<p>When you feel we have:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • treated you unfairly or rudely; or • failed to explain things clearly; or • caused unreasonable delays; or • failed to do what we have said we would; or • failed to follow our processes correctly. <p>When you wish to comment on the service we have provided.</p>	<p>When you do not agree with:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • our decision not to investigate your complaint about a public service provider • our decision to discontinue an investigation, of a public service provider, that we have started • our findings following our investigation of your complaint about a public service provider
<p>And when</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • you have tried to resolve this informally with the member of the Ombudsman’s staff that you have been dealing with; and • your complaint is about something that has happened within one month; and, • if you’re expressing a concern on behalf of somebody else, you have shown us that they have agreed that you can act on their behalf. <p>Or you have a comment you want to make about our service.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The decision you wish to have reviewed was made within one month and • You have new and additional evidence or information or • You can show that we have not properly considered specific information you have provided previously. <p>(If you are submitting your request later than one month after the decision, you will need to say why, so that we can decide whether we can still consider your request.)</p>
<p>How to comment or complain</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • You can use the form on our website at www.ombudsman-wales.org.uk • You can e-mail us or write a letter to us: Email: feedback@ombudsman-wales.org.uk Feedback Manager Public Services Ombudsman for Wales 1 Ffordd yr Hen Gae Pencoed CF35 5LJ 	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> You can get in touch with our Feedback Team by telephone 01656 641161 if you want to make your complaint over the telephone, or if you have difficulty in writing to us or completing the form. Ask the officer with whom you are already in contact to deal with your concern, comment or review request formally. <p>Please let us know how you would like us to correspond with you and whether you have any particular requirements – for example, if you have a disability.</p>	
When we receive the form we will	If you have complained about our service	If you have requested a review of a decision we have taken
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> formally acknowledge your concern within 5 working days and let you know how we intend to deal with it. deal with your concern in an open and honest way. make sure that your dealings with us in the future do not suffer just because you have expressed a concern or made a complaint. Carefully consider your complaint and decide whether and how to investigate it <p>If we are going to investigate your concerns about our service</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> We will set out to you our understanding of your concerns and tell you who will investigate Investigate using files, recordings, notes of conversations, letters, e-mails etc. that we hold. We will talk to staff involved and look at relevant legislation and our policies. Seek to resolve your complaint if that is possible Write to you with the outcome within 20 working days or to explain the reasons why this is not possible. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> formally acknowledge your request for a review within 5 working days ; arrange for the Review Manager to consider your request or arrange for another senior member of staff, who has not been involved previously, to consider it; Write to you with the outcome within 20 working days.

The outcome may be	If you have complained about our service	If you have requested a review of a decision we have taken
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If we formally investigate your complaint, we will let you know what we have found, normally in writing and within 20 working days • We'll explain how and why we came to our conclusions. • If we find that we got it wrong, we'll tell you what went wrong and why it happened. • We'll consider how the mistake affected you. • If we find there is a fault in our systems or the way we do things, we'll tell you what it is and how we plan to change things to stop it happening again. • If we got it wrong, we will always apologise. <p>If we decide not to investigate your complaint about our service we will explain why, in writing.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • That we agree to re-open the case and pass to an investigation team to investigate or investigate further; or • That we agree to re-open the case so that further information may be obtained and considered; or • That we propose additional actions(s) by the service provider to resolve your complaint; or • That we confirm our previous decision
If you remain dissatisfied	If you have complained about our service	If you have requested a review of a decision we have taken
	<p>The Ombudsman is independent of government and is not overseen by a regulator. However, to ensure that we are open to scrutiny and review in our handling of complaints about us, we have appointed an Independent External Reviewer of Complaints about our service.</p> <p>If we do not succeed in resolving your complaint, you may refer your complaint to the Independent Review Service for Customer Complaints. We will give you the details.</p>	<p>The decision on any review is final and there is no further appeal or review process. Unless you subsequently raise new issues that we consider are significant, we will not be able to discuss matters or respond to you further. You cannot use this procedure to complain about a decision on a review.</p> <p>There may be other legal options available to you and you may therefore wish to take legal advice.</p>

	<p>The Independent Reviewer will consider whether your complaint about our service can be reviewed. He / she will then write to you.</p> <p>The Ombudsman will consider any recommendations or suggestions the Reviewer may make and let you know of any decisions.</p>	
If there are lessons we should learn...	<p>We try to learn from any mistakes we've made. Our management team will regularly consider a summary of all complaints and details of any serious complaints. Complaints about our service are also reported annually to the Ombudsman's Advisory Panel, which is made up of a number of independent members (not employees of the Ombudsman).</p> <p>Where there is a need for change, we will develop an action plan setting out what we will do, who will do it and when we plan to do it by.</p>	

To complete the form please click [here](#)

For publication to	State YES or NO to each
PSOW website	YES
PSOW intranet	YES
PSOW publication scheme	YES