



**Public
Prosecution
Service**

Independent
Fair
Effective

Our Complaints Charter

May 2024

Our Complaints Charter

The PPS is committed to providing a high standard of service at all times. However there will be occasions when we fall short of these standards.

When this happens, your feedback and comments are important to us as the information you provide helps us to put things right if they have gone wrong and to improve the overall standard of our service over time.

Our Charter explains what you can expect from us when you make a complaint. This is to give you confidence in our complaints process. It also explains what we need from you in return.

Contact us

Detailed guidance about our complaints process is available on the PPS website at:

www.ppsni.gov.uk

Please let us know if you would like our Charter in a different format, such as Easy Read,

If you have any queries about these standards, or the complaints process more generally, please email info@ppsni.gov.uk.

Our commitments

Providing you with the information you need

We will:

- Provide guidance to explain how we will handle your complaint at each stage and what information we need from you.
- Advise you where a complaint case relates to ongoing legal proceedings, and whether it may be necessary to defer the complaint or only provide limited information if there is a risk of prejudicing the proceedings.
- Direct you, where possible, to someone who can help with your complaint if we are unable to.
- Keep you updated on our progress with your complaint if it is taking longer than anticipated.

Following an open and fair process

We will:

- Ensure that the complaint handling process is open and transparent and that all complaints are considered fairly and impartially in line with our Policy.
- Make sure that your complaint is investigated by individuals other than those about whom the complaint was made.
- Take the time to consider your concerns to make sure we understand your complaint.
- Gather the information we need, including from you, PPS staff and others, before we make our decision.
- Carefully consider the information we have gathered and make an impartial decision on your complaint.
- Set out our decision and any recommendations in writing, and how we reached them.
- Provide a mechanism for independent assessment of complaints in the event that it has not been possible to resolve internally.

Providing you with a good service

We will:

- Treat you professionally and with courtesy, sensitivity and respect.
 - Do our best to deal with your complaint informally where you would like us to resolve your concerns as quickly as possible.
 - Give you a final decision on your complaint as soon as we can.
 - Make sure our service is easily accessible to you and give you help if you need it.
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Living up to our commitments

We will:

- Listen to your feedback and use it to improve our service.
 - Seek to deliver continuous improvement.
 - Ensure that information relating to complaints received is analysed and reported on regularly to the Service's Management Board.
 - Apologise if we make mistakes, and put things right if we can.
 - Respond to all recommendations made by the Independent Assessor of Complaints.
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What we expect from you when you complain to us

We need you to:

- Treat our staff with courtesy and respect.
 - Give us any additional 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.
 - Understand that the complaints process is not the correct mechanism to seek to change a prosecution decision.
 - Appreciate that we strive to carry out our investigations in a way that is fair to everyone involved and have to decide what questions and evidence are relevant to the complaint.
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What we expect from the Independent Assessor of Complaints (IAC)

The IAC will:

- Operate with full independence from the PPS while reviewing complaints in relation to the quality of our service.
 - Operate a confidential and secure service, dealing with you directly.
 - Give you reasons where a complaint cannot be accepted.
 - Respond to you in a timely manner.
 - Determine whether a complaint was handled fairly, thoroughly and impartially by the PPS.
 - Where a complaint is upheld, make recommendations for putting the matter right.
 - Make achievable suggestions for the future improvement of any service delivery problems identified.
 - Influence the adoption of best practice in dealing with complaints.
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If you require any further information about the PPS, or a copy of this document in an alternative format, please contact:

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