

Independent Living Fund Scotland (ILF Scotland)

Complaints Handling Procedure

ILF Scotland is committed to providing high-quality customer services.

We value complaints and use information from them to help us improve our services

1. If something goes wrong or you are dissatisfied with our services, please tell us. This leaflet describes our complaints procedure and how to make a complaint. It also tells you about how we will handle your complaint and what you can expect from us.

What is a complaint?

2. We regard a complaint as any expression of dissatisfaction about our action or lack of action, or about the standard of service provided by us or on our behalf.

What can I complain about?

3. You can complain about things like:
 - failure or refusal to provide a service
 - inadequate quality or standard of service, or an unreasonable delay in providing a service
 - dissatisfaction with one of our policies or its impact on the individual
 - failure to properly apply law, procedure or guidance when delivering services
 - failure to follow the appropriate administrative process
 - conduct, treatment by or attitude of a member of staff
 - disagreement with a decision, (**except** where there is a statutory procedure for challenging that decision, or an established appeals process followed throughout the sector).
4. Your complaint may involve more than one ILF Scotland service or be about someone working on our behalf.

What can't I complain about?

5. There are some things we can't deal with through our complaints handling procedure. These include:
 - a routine first-time request for a service
 - a request for compensation only
 - issues that are in court or have already been heard by a court or a tribunal (if you decide to take legal action, you should let us know as the complaint cannot then be considered under this process)
 - disagreement with a decision where there is a statutory procedure for challenging that decision (such as for freedom of information and subject access requests), or an established appeals process followed throughout the sector
 - a request for information under the Data Protection or Freedom of Information (Scotland) Acts
 - a grievance by a staff member or a grievance relating to employment or staff recruitment
 - a concern raised internally by a member of staff (which was not about a service they received, such as a whistleblowing concern)
 - a concern about a child or an adult's safety
 - an attempt to reopen a previously concluded complaint or to have a complaint reconsidered where we have already given our final decision
 - abuse or unsubstantiated allegations about our organisation or staff; or
 - a concern about the actions or service of a different organisation, where we have no involvement in the issue (**except** where the other organisation is delivering services on our behalf).
6. If other procedures or rights of appeal can help you resolve your concerns, we will give information and advice to help you.

Who can complain?

7. Anyone who receives, requests or is directly affected by our services can make a complaint to us. This includes the representative of someone who is dissatisfied with our service (for example, a relative, friend, advocate or adviser). If you are making a complaint on someone else's behalf, you will normally need their written consent. Please also read the section on **Getting help to make your complaint** below.

How do I complain?

8. You can complain in person at our offices, by phone, in writing or by email using the contact details below.
9. It is easier for us to address complaints if you make them quickly and directly to the service concerned. So please talk to a member of our staff at the service you are complaining about. Then they can try to resolve the issue.
10. When complaining, please tell us:
 - your full name and contact details
 - as much as you can about the complaint
 - what has gone wrong and
 - what outcome you are seeking.

Our contact details

11. Our contact details are:

Email – enquiries@ILF.scot

Phone – 0300 200 2022

Address – ILF Scotland, Ground Floor, Denholm House, Almondvale Business Park, Almondvale Way, Livingston, EH54 6GA

Website – www.ilf.scot

How long do I have to make a complaint?

12. Normally, you must make your complaint within six months of the event you want to complain about or finding out that you have a reason to complain.
13. In exceptional circumstances, we may be able to accept a complaint after the time limit. If you feel that the time limit should not apply to your complaint, please tell us why.

What happens when I have complained?

14. We will always tell you who is dealing with your complaint. Our complaints procedure has two stages.

Stage one: Frontline response

15. We aim to respond to complaints quickly (where possible, when you first tell us about the issue). This could mean an on-the-spot apology and explanation if something has clearly gone wrong, or immediate action to resolve the problem.
16. We will give you our decision at stage one in five working days or less, unless there are exceptional circumstances.
17. If you are not satisfied with the response we give at this stage, we will tell you what you can do next. If you choose to, you can take your complaint to stage two. You must normally ask us to consider your complaint at stage two either:
 - within six months of the event you want to complain about or finding out that you have a reason to complain or
 - within two months of receiving your stage one response (if this is later).
18. In exceptional circumstances, we may be able to accept a stage two complaint after the time limit. If you feel that the time limit should not apply to your complaint, please tell us why.

Stage two: investigation

19. Stage two deals with two types of complaint: where the customer remains dissatisfied after stage one and those that clearly require investigation, and so are handled directly at this stage. If you do not wish your complaint to be handled at stage one, you can ask us to handle it at stage two instead.
20. When using stage two:
 - we will acknowledge receipt of your complaint within three working days
 - we will confirm our understanding of the complaint we will investigate and what outcome you are looking for
 - we will try to resolve your complaint where we can (in some cases we may suggest using an alternative complaint resolution approach, such as mediation) and
 - where we cannot resolve your complaint, we will give you a full response as soon as possible, normally within 20 working days.
21. If our investigation will take longer than 20 working days, we will tell you. We will tell you our revised time limits and keep you updated on progress.

What if I'm still dissatisfied?

22. After we have given you our final decision, if you are still dissatisfied with our decision or the way we dealt with your complaint, you can ask the Scottish Public Services Ombudsman (SPSO) / Northern Ireland Public Services Ombudsman (NIPSO) to look at it.
23. The SPSO / NIPSO are independent organisations that investigate complaints. You can ask the SPSO / NIPSO to look at your complaint if:
 - you have gone all the way through ILF Scotland's complaints handling procedure
 - it is less than 12 months after you became aware of the matter you want to complain about; and
 - the matter has not been (and is not being) considered in court.

24. The SPSO / NIPSO will ask you to complete a complaint form and provide a copy of our final response to your complaint. You can do this online at www.spsso.org.uk/complain/form or <https://www.nipso.org.uk/nipso/making-a-complaint/online-complaints-form/> or call them on Freephone:
25. The SPSO's contact details are:
SPSO, Bridgeside House, 99 McDonald Road, Edinburgh, EH7 4NS
(if you would like to visit in person, you must make an appointment first).
Their freepost address is: FREEPOST SPSO
Freephone: 0800 377 7330
Online contact www.spsso.org.uk/contact-us
Website: www.spsso.org.uk
26. The NIPSO's contact details are:
Northern Ireland Public Services Ombudsman, Progressive House,
33 Wellington Place, Belfast. BT1 6HN
Their freepost address is: FREEPOST NIPSO
Freephone: 0800 34 34 24
Website: www.nipso.org.uk
Email: nipso@nipso.org.uk

Getting help to make your complaint

27. We understand that you may be unable or reluctant to make a complaint yourself. We accept complaints from the representative of a person who is dissatisfied with our service. We can take complaints from a friend, relative, or an advocate, if you have given them your consent to complain for you.
28. You may wish to get independent support or advocacy to help you progress your complaint. You can find out about advocates in your area by contacting the **Scottish Independent Advocacy Alliance**, tel: 0131 510 9410, website: www.siaa.org.uk.
29. You can find out about advisers in your area through **Citizens Advice Scotland**, website: www.cas.org.uk or check your phone book for your local citizens advice bureau.
30. We are committed to making our service easy to use for all members of the community. In line with our statutory equalities' duties, we will always ensure that reasonable adjustments are made to help you access and use our services. If you have trouble putting your complaint in writing, or want this information in another language or format, such as large font, or Braille, please tell us in person, contact us on 0300 200 2022 or email us on enquiries@ilf.scot.

Quick guide to our complaints' procedure

Complaints procedure

You can make your complaint in person, by phone, by email or in writing. We will always try to deal with your complaint quickly. But if we think we need to investigate, we will tell you and update you on our progress.

We have a **two-stage complaints procedure**.



Stage One: Frontline response

We will respond to your complaint within **five working days** if we can. If you are dissatisfied with our response, you can ask us to consider your complaint at stage two.



Stage Two: Investigation

We will look at your complaint at this stage if you are dissatisfied with our response at stage one. Or if it is clear that we need to investigate. We will acknowledge your complaint within **three working days**.

We will investigate the complaint and give you our decision as soon as possible but within **20 working days** *unless* we need more time.



Public Services Ombudsman

If you remain dissatisfied with our final decision or about the way we have handled your complaint, you can ask the SPSO or the NIPSO to consider our handling of your complaint.

Address: ILF Scotland, Denholm House, Almondvale Business Park, Almondvale Way, Livingston, EH54 6GA **Tel:** 0300 200 2022 **Email:** enquiries@ilf.scot **Web:** www.ilf.scot

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Registered office: Denholm House, Almondvale Business Park, Almondvale Way, Livingston, EH54 6GA