

Utility Regulator complaints procedure

About the Utility Regulator

The Utility Regulator is the independent non-ministerial government department responsible for regulating Northern Ireland's electricity, gas, water and sewerage industries, to promote the short and long-term interests of consumers.

We make sure that the energy and water utility industries in Northern Ireland are regulated and developed within ministerial policy as set out in our statutory duties.

We are governed by a Board and are accountable to the Northern Ireland Assembly through financial and annual reporting obligations.

Our complaints procedure

The Utility Regulator is committed to providing value and sustainability in energy and water, always acting in the interest of the consumer.

This procedure outlines how you can make a complaint if you are unhappy with the Utility Regulator's procedures or the way in which the Utility Regulator has operated them.

This complaints procedure does not apply and should not be followed if your complaint relates to the service provided by your energy or water company. In those circumstances please refer to the procedure for dealing with Appeals Complaints and Disputes which you will find in the customer information section of our website www.uregni.gov.uk

Similarly this procedure does not apply if your complaint is in relation to a request brought under the Freedom of Information legislation. In this regard, please refer to our Freedom of Information Guidance which can be found in the Freedom of Information section of our website.

How to make a complaint

Informal Procedure

Our aim is to resolve your complaint as quickly as possible and you are invited initially to bring any matter of concern to the attention of the Utility Regulator official with whom you have been dealing. However, having taken that approach, if you still feel dissatisfied you may then wish to initiate a formal complaint in writing.

Formal Procedure

Step 1

The Utility Regulator aims to resolve all complaints as quickly and fairly as possible. In the first instance you are asked to provide full written details of your complaint and send it to:

The Complaints Officer
Utility Regulator
Queens House
14 Queen Street
Belfast
BT1 6ED

Fax: 028 9031 1740
Email: info@uregni.gov.uk

We will provide written acknowledgement of your complaint within two working days and following a thorough investigation, will aim to provide you with a written response within 20 working days of receiving the complaint from you. If we require any further information from you we will contact you as soon as possible after receiving your complaint. Our response will advise you as to the outcomes of the investigation and any action that will be taken as a result of the investigation. If it is not possible to respond to your complaint within 20 working days we will write to you within that timeframe to update you on progress and indicate when you can expect to be informed as to the outcome.

Step 2

If you are unhappy with the response provided by the Complaints Officer, or do not feel your complaint has been resolved satisfactorily, you can contact the Director of Corporate Affairs, again detailing the nature of your complaint. The Director will further investigate your complaint and will forward you a response in writing within 10 working days. If it is not possible to respond to your complaint within 10 working days we will write to you to indicate when you can expect to be informed as to the outcome.

You can write to the Director of Corporate Affairs at:

Director of Corporate Affairs
Utility Regulator
Queens House
14 Queen Street
Belfast
BT1 6ED

Step 3

If at this stage you still remain dissatisfied with the responses of the Utility Regulator, you can direct your complaint to the Ombudsman's Office.

Your complaint must initially be referred to the Ombudsman by a Member of the NI Assembly (MLA) or by a Member of Parliament (MP).

You can contact the Ombudsman in the following ways:

By post:

The Ombudsman
Freepost BEL 1478
Belfast
BT1 6BR

Telephone: 0800 34 34 24 or 028 9023 3821

Fax: 028 9023 4912

E-mail: ombudsman@ni-ombudsman.org.uk

OR

By calling in person between the hours 9.30am & 4.30pm at:

The Ombudsman
33 Wellington Place
Belfast
B T1 6HN

For further details on the role of the Ombudsman and their complaints procedure please visit www.ni-ombudsman.org.uk