

'Our service standards' - Before 29 September 2023

Freedom of Information and Environmental Information Complaints

We want to improve public authorities' information rights practices and investigating your FOIA and EIR complaints will help us to do this.

We are the independent regulator of FOIA and the EIR. We handle complaints impartially and don't act on behalf of individuals or public authorities. The Commissioner does not investigate cases personally and has delegated this responsibility to case officers.

If you want to raise complaints with us about a public authority's handling of a request for information you have made, then we ask that you do so within six weeks of receiving their final response or last substantive contact. Waiting longer than this can affect the decisions we reach. In most cases an undue delay will mean that we will not consider the matter at all.

'Our service standards' – After 29 September 2023

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If you want to raise a complaint with us about a public authority's handling of your request for information, then we ask that you do so within six weeks of receiving the internal review outcome. Waiting longer than this can affect the decisions we reach. In most cases an undue delay will mean that we will not consider the matter at all. If the public authority has still not provided you with an initial response to your request, then in most cases we will progress your complaint.

'Before you complain' - Before 30 October 2023

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Before you complain

The complaint process

The outcome of your complaint

After you complain

You can complain to the ICO about the way a public authority has handled your request for information under the Freedom of Information Act (FOI), Environmental Information Regulation (EIR) or the Re-use of Public Sector Information Regulations 2015 (RPSI).

Before you complain to us you need to have:

- followed up with the public authority, if you have not received a response after 20 working days; or
- complained to them (also known as requesting an internal review), if you are not happy with their response.

If you do not follow these steps before you submit your complaint, we will ask you to do so and may not accept your complaint.

You should complain to us within six weeks of the public authority's response or your last contact with them.

[Check if your complaint is eligible to come to the ICO.](#)

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If you do not follow these steps before you submit your complaint, we will ask you to do so and may not accept your complaint.

You should complain to us within six weeks of receiving the internal review outcome. In most cases an undue delay will mean that we will not consider the matter at all. If the public authority has not provided you with an initial response to your request, then you are asked to provide us with evidence that you have attempted to resolve this issue directly with the public authority in the first instance.