

Postal Redress Service (POSTRS)

Summary of Service Rules

This Summary has been created to provide a quick reference guide for users of the Service. It summarises the key rules in respect of the process and the scope of the Service, giving a simple overview of the core principles.

However, whilst this Summary is based upon the Service Rules, it is intended to act as guidance only. It is the Service Rules that apply to cases. In the event of a conflict of information between the Service Rules and this Summary, the Service Rules will prevail.

Contents

1. Introduction	1
2. What the Service covers	2
3. Applying to use the Service	3
4. The Adjudication process	4
➤ The Application	4
➤ Remedy Review	4
➤ Settlements	5
➤ Objections	5
➤ The Response	6
➤ The Decision	6
➤ Compliance with the Decision	7
5. Powers of the adjudicator	7

1. Introduction

- The Service provides an independent way of resolving disputes between subscribing companies that provide postal services (“the Company”) and their Customers. This is done by way of an adjudication process.

- To use the Service, the Customer must have an unresolved complaint that has exhausted the Company's complaints procedure (unless: the Company has agreed that the complaint should be referred to the Service; or the Customer has made reasonable efforts but has been unable to make a complaint to the Company; or, the Customer has made reasonable efforts but the complaint remains unresolved after 90 days).

2. What the Service covers

- The Service can be used to resolve complaints about:
 - one or more mail items sent to the Customer via the Company that the customer has received, or of which they are the intended recipient; and/or
 - one or more mail products and/or services that the Customer has bought from the Company.

(NB. For complaints made against Royal Mail Group (RMG), the conditions set out in the document called 'Royal Mail's products and services available through the Postal Redress Service (POSTRS)' must also have been met. This document can be found [here](#).)

- The Service cannot consider complaints, or parts of complaints, which fall into one or more of the following categories:
 - applications made by someone who is not a 'Customer';
 - applications made against a company that does not subscribe to the Service;
 - where the Customer has not exhausted the Company's complaints procedure (unless: the Company has agreed that the complaint should be referred to the Service; or the Customer has made reasonable efforts but has been unable to make a complaint to the Company; or, the Customer has made reasonable efforts but the complaint remains unresolved after 90 days);
 - complaints received more than 12 months from the date the Customer received notice from the Company that it is unable to resolve the complaint;
 - complaints about something the Service does not cover;
 - applications where the total sum of money claimed is more than £10,000.00;
 - complaints that are more appropriately dealt with by a court, regulatory body, or other formal process;
 - complaints that CEDR thinks are frivolous and/or vexatious;
 - complaints that are the subject of either:
 - an existing, on-going application; or

- a previous valid application that reached resolution;
- complaints that have been, or are, the subject of court proceedings or an alternative independent procedure for the determination of disputes;
- complaints about the fairness of the Company's general commercial practices and/or commercial decisions;
- complaints about:
 - damage to property (other than damage to one or more mail items subject to the complaint);
 - fraud or other criminal matters;
 - data protection;
 - personal injury;
 - discrimination;
- complaints that have been agreed by the parties to be settled;
- where the details of the complaint in the application differ from the details that were provided by the Customer when complaining to the Company directly;
- complaints about one or more postal products and/or services that have been the subject of either:
 - an existing application made by another customer; or
 - a previous valid application by another customer that reached resolution;
- for complaints made against RMG:
 - the conditions set out in the document called 'Royal Mail's products and service available through the Postal Redress Service (POSTRS)' have not been met; and/or
 - the complaint is about mail products and/or service for which the Customer has a contract with the Company;
- applications where the Customer has not requested any valid remedies;
- complaints that would seriously impair the effective operation of CEDR.

3. Applying to use the Service

- The Customer must send CEDR a completed application form.
- In their application, the Customer can request:
 - an apology;
 - a product or service;
 - some practical action to be taken by the Company;

- a payment of money for direct loss (the amount will not exceed the limits set out in the terms and conditions of the relevant product(s) and/or service(s));
 - a payment of money for any distress and/or inconvenience caused by the Company failing to keep to its own complaints handling procedure (this amount will not exceed £50.00).
- Their application should give details of:
 - the product and/or service provided by the Company that the complaint is about;
 - the background to the complaint;
 - the precise issues that are in dispute;
 - the steps already taken to attempt to reach a resolution with the Company;
 - the reasons for requesting the remedy or remedies asked for; and
 - the reasons for the amount of any money requested, including any amount requested for distress and/or inconvenience.

4. The Adjudication process

➤ The Application

- CEDR will make an initial assessment within 15 working days as to whether or not an application meets the requirements of the Service.
- Once accepted, the Company has 15 working days to take one of the following actions:
 - tell CEDR that one or more remedies, or an aspect of those remedies, requested cannot be directed by an adjudicator (initiating a “Remedy Review”); or
 - settle the complaint; or
 - object to the complaint being considered as its outside the scope of the Service; or
 - submit its response to the complaint.

➤ Remedy Review

- To make a Remedy Review request, the Company must contact CEDR explain why one or more remedies cannot be directed by an adjudicator.
- An adjudicator will decide whether or not they agree that that one or more remedies cannot be directed.
- If an adjudicator does not agree that one or more remedies requested cannot be directed by an adjudicator the complaint will continue.

- If an adjudicator agrees that one or more remedies cannot be directed by an adjudicator, CEDR will tell the Customer. The Customer will be given 10 working days to change their requested remedies if they wish to.

➤ **Settlements**

- If the Company agrees to give the Customer all the remedies requested, the Company must tell CEDR – this is a “Settlement in Full”.
- When CEDR receives notification that a Settlement in Full has been reached, CEDR will close the complaint. The Company must provide the Customer with all these remedies within 20 working days.
- If the Customer believes that the settlement offered by the Company is not a Settlement in Full, the Customer must tell CEDR within 20 working days of the closure of the complaint. CEDR will then consider whether or not a Settlement in Full has been offered. If CEDR thinks that a Settlement in Full has been offered, the complaint will remain closed. If CEDR thinks that the settlement offered is not a Settlement in Full, the timeframe will be restarted for the Company to respond.
- If the Company reaches any other resolution with the Customer this is a “Negotiated Settlement”. When CEDR receives evidence of the Negotiated Settlement, CEDR will close the complaint. The Company must provide the Customer with all the agreed remedies within 20 working days.
- If the Customer feels that the Company has not fulfilled the Settlement in Full or Negotiated Settlement, they must tell CEDR. CEDR will then consider whether or not the settlement has been fulfilled. If CEDR thinks that the settlement has been fulfilled, the complaint will remain closed. If CEDR thinks that the settlement has not been fulfilled, it will re-open the complaint and give the Company five working days to either:
 - show that the remedies have been given; or
 - to object to the complaint being considered; or
 - to submit a response to the complaint
- If the Company provides evidence showing that the settlement has been fulfilled, the complaint will be closed.

➤ **Objections**

- The Company can object to the complaint being within the scope of the Service.
- An adjudicator will decide whether or not they agree that the Company has shown that part or all of the complaint falls outside the scope of the Service.

- If an adjudicator does not agree that the Company has shown that any part of the complaint falls outside the scope of the Service, the objection will be rejected and the complaint will remain active.
- If an adjudicator agrees that the Company has shown that all of the complaint falls outside the scope of the Service, the objection will be upheld. If the objection is upheld, the Customer will be given 10 working days to provide reasons and/or further evidence as to why part or all of the complaint falls within the scope of the Service. An adjudicator will then consider this and make a final decision if the complaint can continue or not.
- The decision to withdraw the complaint from the Service is final and cannot be reviewed or appealed.

➤ **The Response**

- When CEDR receives the Response, a copy of it will be sent to the Customer.
- If the Company does not submit a Response, the adjudicator will have the power to make a decision considering only the information provided by the Customer.
- The Customer has five working days from the date on which the Response is sent to them to provide any comments. The Customer does not have to provide comments. If the Customer does provide comments, those comments can only relate to points raised in the Response and must not introduce any new matters.
- CEDR will then appoint the adjudicator to decide the outcome of the complaint.

➤ **The Decision**

- The adjudicator will produce a "Decision". The Proposed Decision will generally be issued within 30 working days of the Customer's application being accepted.
- The Decision will be sent to the parties simultaneously.
- The Customer then has 20 working days to tell CEDR whether they accept the Decision in full or reject it. Decisions cannot be accepted in part.
- If the Customer tells CEDR that they accept the Decision in full, the Decision will become binding on the Parties.
- If the Customer tells CEDR that they reject the Decision or do not accept the Decision in full, the Decision will not be binding on either of the Parties.
- The adjudicator's Decision cannot be reviewed or appealed.

➤ **Compliance with the Decision**

- If the accepted Decision directs the Company to take any actions, the Company must take these actions.
- If the Customer feels that the Company has not complied with the Decision, the Customer must tell CEDR. The Customer must detail which of the remedies have not been provided. CEDR will then consider whether or not the Decision has been complied with. If CEDR thinks that the Decision has been complied with, the complaint will be closed. If CEDR thinks that the Decision has not been complied with, CEDR will contact the Company to request that it complies within five working days.

5. Powers of the adjudicator

- An adjudicator has the power to do any of the following:
 - change any of the process time limits;
 - request further comments and/or evidence from the parties;
 - proceed with the Adjudication even if either of the parties does not keep to the rules;
 - consult any relevant evidence not provided by either of the parties;
 - take into account any evidence provided by either of the parties that they consider relevant;
 - withdraw a complaint if the entirety of the complaint falls outside the scope of the Service;
 - close a complaint if the parties settle it before the Decision is made;
 - decide whether or not the Company has fulfilled a settlement;
 - decide whether or not the Company has complied with the Decision.
- If the adjudicator finds that the Customer's complaint succeeds in full or in part, they can direct the Company to:
 - provide an apology;
 - provide an available product or service;
 - take an action that they consider the Company can reasonably carry out;
 - pay the Customer a sum of money for direct loss (the amount will not exceed the limits set out in the terms and conditions of the relevant product(s) and/or service(s));
 - pay the Customer a sum of money for any distress and/or inconvenience caused by the Company failing to keep to its own complaints handling procedure (this amount will not exceed £50.00).