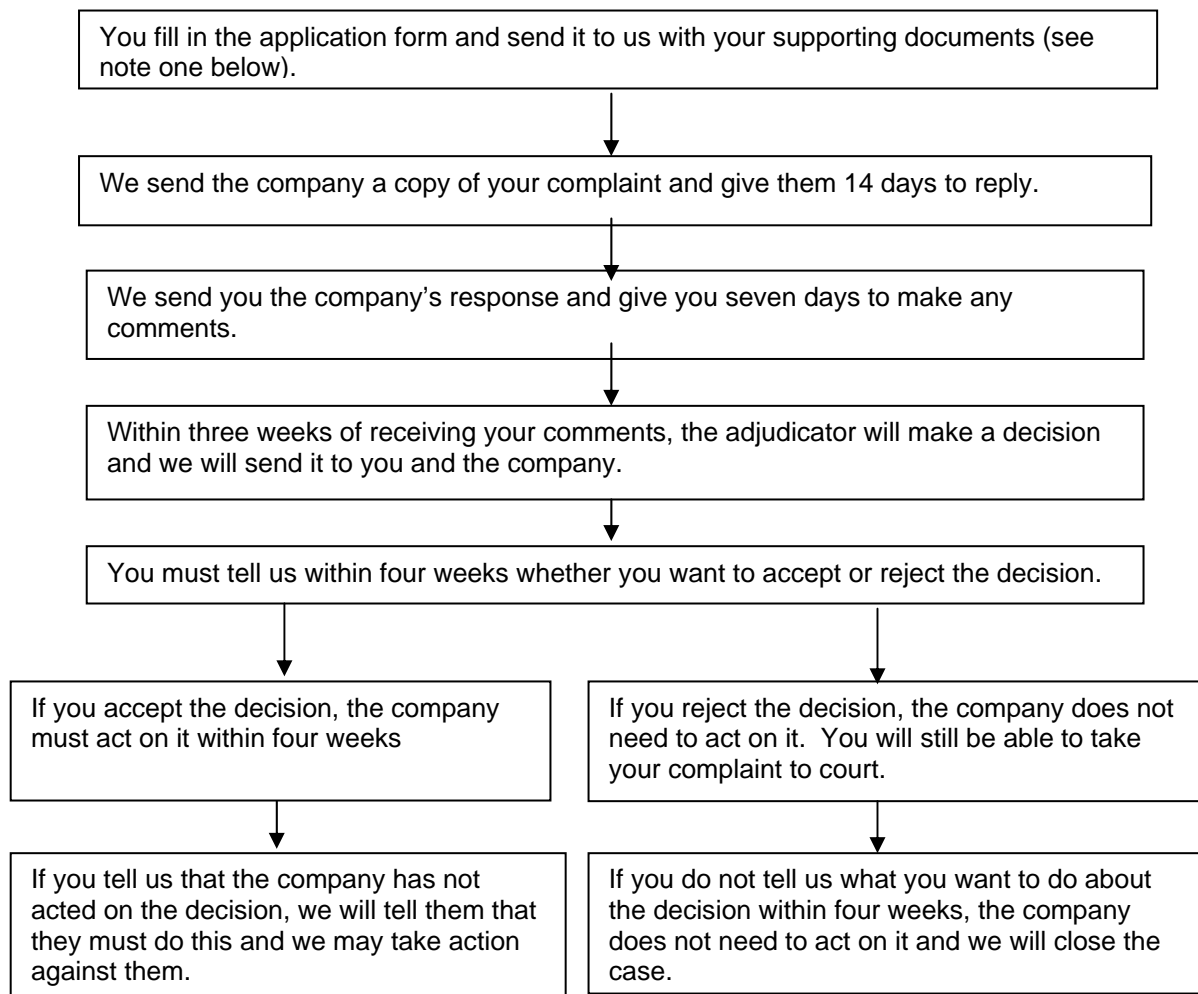


Information for customers

The Postal Redress Service (POSTRS) is approved by Postcomm (the postal services regulator) as a scheme you can use to settle disputes with licensed postal service operators that are members of the scheme (referred to throughout as 'companies'). POSTRS is an independent service run by us, IDRS Ltd. This is a free service. The only costs you might have to pay are for phone calls you make to us (at standard rates), photocopying, or postage costs associated with filling in the forms and providing documents.

A typical POSTRS case



Note one

It is important that you fill in the application form as carefully as possible and provide documents to support your case. To make a decision, the adjudicator will read and rely on the information you and the company provide.

You can fill in the form online at www.postrs.org.uk. If you need more information or want help to fill in the form, call us on 020 7520 3766. If you are hard of hearing and have a textphone, call us on 020 7520 3767.

If you want more information, visit the 'Frequently Asked Questions' section on www.postrs.org.uk or call us on 020 7520 3766. If you are hard of hearing and have a textphone, call 020 7520 3767.

Some questions and answers

How do I know if the company I am complaining about is a member of POSTRS?

For a full list of companies that are members of the scheme, or to apply to use POSTRS, please visit our website at www.postrs.org.uk.

Do I need a solicitor?

You do not need a solicitor but you can use one if you want to. If you want to use a solicitor, you will have to pay for their services.

I have a complaint about a company that is member of POSTRS. What should I do?

You must give the company a chance to settle your complaint before you apply to use POSTRS. You can do this by following the company's formal complaints procedure and contacting their complaints department. You can apply to use POSTRS if:

- you have not been able to settle your complaint within the timescale set out in the company's complaints procedure; or
- the company has referred you to the scheme; or
- the company has not followed its complaints procedure when handling your complaint; or
- you have not been able to contact the company, despite making every effort to do so.

Is there a time limit on when can I apply to use POSTRS?

You must normally send your application within nine months of first complaining to the company.

What can POSTRS make the company do?

If the adjudicator agrees with your complaint, we can tell the company to do any or all of the following.

- Give you an apology or explanation.
- Give you a product or service, or take some practical action that will benefit you.
- Pay you any compensation up to the amount you claimed on the application form for any loss that you may have suffered. This must be within the limits set out in the terms and conditions of the relevant product or service you used.
- Pay you an amount for any stress, anxiety or inconvenience you suffered as a result of how the company handled your complaint. This amount must be no more than £50.

Who makes the decision on my complaint?

The decision will be made by an adjudicator who has received training in dealing with the types of complaint POSTRS covers, as well as legal training (particularly relating to consumer matters). There is detailed information on each adjudicator on the POSTRS website.

How does the adjudicator decide on how much compensation to award?

The adjudicator will take account of all of the circumstances you and the company have described in the evidence you both provided, and will consider the company's published terms and conditions for the service you used, the law and any relevant customer service standards. The adjudicator will always consider your arguments and evidence (as well as the company's) and will make a fair and reasonable decision.

When considering whether to award compensation for any stress, anxiety or inconvenience you may have suffered as a result of how your complaint was handled, the adjudicator will take account

of the following.

- How much you have claimed in your application.
- What you have said about the degree of stress, anxiety or inconvenience you may have suffered and whether it could have been avoided or its effects reduced.
- What the company says about your claim and how they have behaved towards you.

If the adjudicator decides that your complaint was not handled in line with the company's published standards and that the company behaved unreasonably, the adjudicator may award compensation up to the amount you claim on the application form. You should be aware that, by law, the amount of compensation awarded must be in proportion to all the circumstances of the case.

What if the company and I decide to settle my complaint?

You and the company can settle the matter between yourselves at any time before the adjudicator makes a decision. If you decide to do this, you and the company deal with each other direct, not through POSTRS.

If you do settle the matter, we need the company to let us know in writing, and we will call you to make sure that the complaint has been settled. If the company does not keep to any agreement you have made with them you can ask us to re-open the case.

What if the company gives me everything I asked for?

The company must tell us that they have done this. If you also tell us that they have done this, we will close the case.

What happens when I receive the decision?

You will have four weeks to let us know whether you accept it. If you do not tell us within four weeks, the company will not have a duty to take action in line with the decision, but you can still take the matter to court.

If I agree with the decision within four weeks, when will the company take the necessary action?

The company must act on the decision within four weeks of the date you told us you accepted the decision.

What happens if the company does not take the necessary action?

We will remind the company that they must keep to the adjudicator's decision. If they still do not take the necessary action, we will refer the matter to the POSTRS Council, who will consider what further action must be taken. We will keep you up to date with what action we plan to take if this happens.

I have a complaint with a POSTRS member but they say I cannot use POSTRS. Why?

If your complaint is about one of the following matters, POSTRS cannot deal with it.

- Products and services that are not relevant postal services products.
- Matters already being dealt with by the courts or under any other complaints procedure.
- Employment and staff issues in companies that are members of the scheme.
- Business decisions a company has made on whether or not to provide a product or service, and the terms under which they will provide a product or service.
- Products and services you bought under contract.