

## Making a Complaint about the Public Prosecution Service (PPS) Key Information

**Initial complaint (stage 1)  
submitted by letter, email, PPS  
website or via the Victim and  
Witness Care Unit**



**Complaint acknowledged within  
5 working days and referred to  
an Assistant Director or senior  
manager for investigation and  
report**



**Full response issued within 30  
working days or reasons and  
revised target date given**



**If dissatisfied at stage 1 then  
you can write to the Head of  
Policy and Information and  
request a review (stage 2)**



**Stage 2 complaint  
acknowledged and referred to  
another Assistant Director for  
consideration and response  
within 30 working days**



**If you remain dissatisfied, then  
you can refer your complaint to  
the Independent Assessor of  
Complaints Ms Sarah Havlin\*  
for investigation (stage 3)**

**\*[independent.assessor@ppsni.gov.uk](mailto:independent.assessor@ppsni.gov.uk)**

A complaint is defined as: "Any communication which expresses dissatisfaction with, or criticism of, the service provided by the PPS." Complaints can relate to - service delivery (e.g. the efficiency of our service); legal matters\*\* (e.g. our handling of a case); or a blend of the two.

We will deal with all complaints sensitively, fairly and in confidence and will inform you whether your complaint has been upheld (wholly or in part) or not upheld. If your complaint is upheld, we will apologise, put the matter right if we can and try to ensure that it does not happen to other service users. Unfortunately we are unable to offer financial compensation of any kind.

Unless there are exceptional circumstances a complaint will only be dealt with if it is made within 6 months from the date of the incident in question.

Separate arrangements apply for victims who wish to ask the PPS for reasons for a decision not to prosecute or if they wish to have a no prosecution decision reviewed. Such a request can be made to [reviews@ppsni.gov.uk](mailto:reviews@ppsni.gov.uk).

This process is not designed for defendants to seek to have the cases against them withdrawn or to overturn their convictions - correspondence of this type will not be logged as a complaint. You should instead seek independent legal advice.

We may decline to deal with complainants who are abusive, unreasonably persistent or where our formal complaints process has been exhausted.

Where a complaint relates to ongoing legal proceedings, we may only be able to provide limited information or it may be necessary to defer the complaint if doing so might prejudice proceedings.

It should be noted that although stages 1 and 2 may apply to service delivery and / or legal complaints, the Independent Assessor can only respond to service delivery issues or the service delivery elements of a blended complaint.

**For further information, please refer to the PPS website: [www.ppsni.gov.uk/complaints](http://www.ppsni.gov.uk/complaints)**

**\*\* Legal matters exclude issues that relate directly to a decision to prosecute, not to prosecute or to divert from the formal prosecution process.**