



ONWARD COMPLAINTS POLICY

Easy Read Guide

December 2024

If you need any help understanding the information in this document, please give us a call on **0300 555 0600**, send us a message on WhatsApp to **07418 344 603** or send an email to **customerservices@onward.co.uk**.

We are committed to providing a high-quality service to the customers and communities we serve. However, we recognise that sometimes things can go wrong and this guide explains how you can make a complaint.



What is a complaint?

A complaint is when you are unhappy with the standards of our services, actions, or a lack of action from us. You might complain to us because:

- ✓ We haven't met our service standards
- ✓ We have done something we shouldn't have done
- ✓ You are unhappy with how something has been dealt with
- ✓ We have taken too long to respond to you
- ✓ You are unhappy with how a staff member has treated you
- ✓ We have not met the Housing Ombudsman's Complaint Handling Code



What isn't a complaint?

Some things are not complaints, such as:

- ✗ Asking for information about one of our services
- ✗ Asking us to deal with the actions of others, for example letting us know about anti-social behaviour for the first time
- ✗ Something that is already in court or being heard by a court or tribunal
- ✗ Asking for information under the Data Protection Act
- ✗ If you are unhappy with a decision where there is already a process for challenging that decision or an appeals process already in place



Examples of what isn't a complaint:

- ✗ You tell us that there is a leak in your home that needs fixing. This is not a complaint but could be one if we didn't fix this quickly.
- ✗ You tell us your neighbour is playing loud music. This isn't a complaint but could be if you were unhappy about how we dealt with it.
- ✗ You ask us for more information about one of our policies. This isn't a complaint but could be if we don't get back to you quickly or give you the wrong information.



Who can complain?

Anyone that already gets a service from Onward, asks for one or is affected by what we do can make a complaint. You can do this for someone, for example if you're a family member, friend, advocate, or adviser.

How to make a complaint:

There are lots of ways to make a complaint. You can do this by:

-  visiting the My Onward Portal (my.onward.co.uk)
-  calling **0300 555 0600** or messaging **07418 344 603** on WhatsApp between 8am-6pm Monday to Friday and 10am-6pm on Wednesdays
-  emailing customerservices@onward.co.uk
-  writing to **Renaissance Court, 2 Christie Way, Didsbury, Manchester, M21 7QY**



If you send a complaint to our Chief Executive or the Chair of the Board this will be sent to our Customer Resolutions Team and will follow this policy.

What happens when you make a complaint?

There are two steps to our Complaints Policy. Stage 1 is the first step as shown in the image below.



When you contact us, our Customer Resolutions Team will be in touch in five working days.

They will:

- Introduce themselves
- Explain the stage 1 complaints process
- Ask questions to help us understand your complaint and try to agree a solution
- Agree how we will update you on progress
- Reply within **ten working days** to explain the outcome and next steps
- If we need more time, we will let you know and agree when we will respond
- If we need to take further action to resolve the complaint, for example carrying out a repair, we will keep in regular contact until all the work is complete and you're happy with the outcome.

We will write to you to explain our understanding of your complaint, what we have found and what we will do to make this right. We will only close the complaint when all actions are done.

What happens if I'm still unhappy?

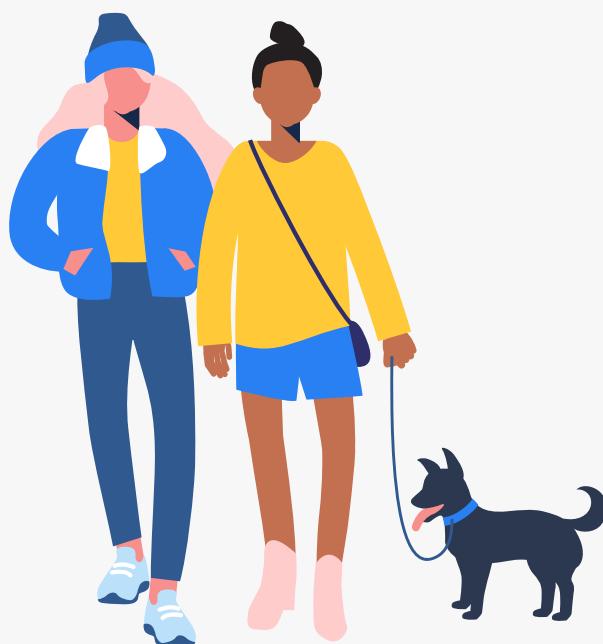
If you're still unhappy after stage 1, you can ask for a review by a director. This is stage 2 of our complaints process. We will investigate to understand why you remain unhappy and to identify what you would like to happen next to resolve your complaint. When you ask for a review, a director (or representative) will:

- Introduce themselves
- Explain the stage 2 complaints process
- Ask questions to help them understand the complaint
- Agree with you how we will update you on progress
- If we need more time, we will let you know and agree when we will respond

We will write to you to explain our understanding of your complaint, our findings and what we will do to make this right. We will only close the complaint when all actions are done.

If you need help with making a complaint

If you would like to discuss your concerns with someone impartial, or if you need help with making a complaint, you can speak to a Member of Parliament, your local councillor or an advocate of your choice.



You can also contact the Ombudsman for help and support at any point during your complaint.

The Housing Ombudsman

The Housing Ombudsman Service is an independent organisation that investigates complaints. You can get in touch with the Housing Ombudsman at any stage for help.

They can look at your complaint if:

- You have been through every stage of our complaints process
- It's less than 12 months after you first knew about what you wanted to complain about
- The issue hasn't or isn't being looked at by a court. You will be asked to fill out a complaint form and give a copy of our response. You can get in touch with the Ombudsman by:
 - visiting housing-ombudsman.org.uk
 - emailing info@housing-ombudsman.org.uk
 - calling their freephone number **0300 111 3000**
 - writing to **The Housing Ombudsman Service, PO Box 1484, Unit D, Preston PR2 0ET**

Complaints about gas and electricity

Some of our customers get services that include providing gas and electricity. If you have complained about gas or electricity services we provide to you and are not happy with the outcome you can contact the Energy Ombudsman.

The Energy Ombudsman is approved by Ofgem as an independent dispute resolution service which aims to impartially and independently resolve disputes between energy suppliers and their customers.

You can ask the Energy Ombudsman to investigate your complaint if:

- You have fully exhausted our complaint handling procedure.
- We notify you that we have been unable to resolve your complaint to your satisfaction within 8 weeks and/or have issued you with a deadlock letter.
- You feel that you have encountered sustained difficulty in raising your complaint with us.

You can get in touch with the Energy Ombudsman by:

- visiting energyombudsman.org
- calling **0330 1624**
- writing to **The Energy Ombudsman, PO Box 966, Warrington WA4 9DF**



Compensation

From time to time, we may offer compensation payments or other remedies as part of our complaints process.

How do you approach compensation?

Compensation payments are reviewed on a case-by-case basis, with fairness as our primary goal. We will always:

- Ensure that you are treated fairly
- Be consistent in our approach
- Aim to rectify issues quickly and fairly
- Put things right
- Provide clear expectations about the complaint compensation process
- Listen to your feedback and use it to help improve our services

We have no fixed limit on compensation payments and our colleagues are empowered to award an amount which appropriately reflects your experience and the severity of the situation.

As well as putting things right, offering a compensation payment or other remedy, our approach will always include:

- A sincere apology that addresses when we have failed to meet our service standards and why
- An acknowledgement of how this has impacted you
- Confirmation of how and when we intend to resolve any outstanding issues
- An explanation of how we will learn from the situation and improve our services

When will I be offered compensation?

Compensation payments or other remedies may be offered when:

- The services we deliver haven't met our standards
- You have experienced distress, loss, and/or inconvenience when we have failed to meet our service standards
- You lose certain facilities and/or amenities beyond agreed response times, such as heating, hot water, or not being able to use a part of your home or equipment, when we have failed to meet our service standards
- It is appropriate to recognise dissatisfaction, disturbance and/or inconvenience caused when resolving your complaint

When won't I be offered compensation?

Whilst we review compensation cases individually, compensation payments or other remedies would not usually be offered when:

- An out of the ordinary situation resulted in us being unable to meet our service standards
- There are delays that are outside of our control
- You have made low-quality home improvements or carried out repairs, modifications or adaptations without consent from Onward
- A fault or service failure happens because of your misuse, negligence or damage
- The service failure is the fault of a third party, such as a utilities company

Please note, we do not offer compensation payments or other remedies to cover a loss of earnings.

How do you calculate the impact of service failure?

In some cases, service failure can result in our customers being negatively impacted.

We understand that some customers may be impacted more than others, and the level of impact can depend on the service that has failed, as well as the customer's personal circumstances. That's why we calculate the impact of service failure on a case-by-case basis.

What if my belongings have been damaged?

We advise that all customers should have contents insurance to protect their furniture, decorations and other personal belongings from damage or theft.

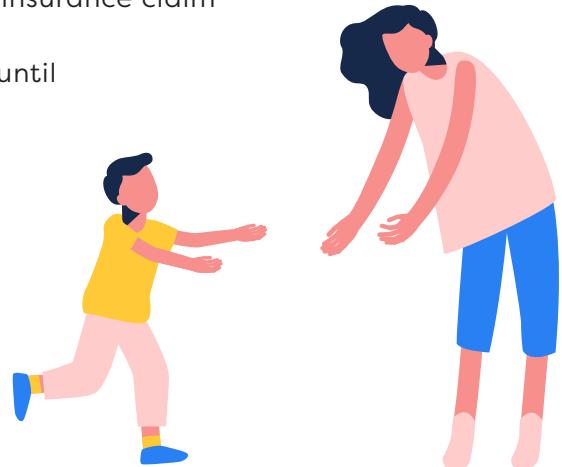
If damage to your furniture, decorations or personal belongings has been caused by the failure of our services, or the failure of a contractor's service, we will put things right.

Things not covered by this policy

- ✗ Complaints about services by other landlords, councils, or the government or businesses
- ✗ Complaints about damage to property unless caused by something we have done
- ✗ A complaint where there is already court action or an insurance claim against us
- ✗ If there is a mediation in progress we will put on hold until there is a decision
- ✗ If the complaint has already been reviewed unless there is new information
- ✗ If you show unacceptable behaviour

If you want to speak to us about anything else you can:

- 💡 visit the My Onward Portal (my.onward.co.uk)
- 📞 call **0300 555 0600** or message **07418 344 603** on WhatsApp between 8am-6pm Monday to Friday and 10am-6pm on Wednesdays
- ✉️ email customerservices@onward.co.uk



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Jeśli potrzebujesz pomocy w zrozumieniu tego dokumentu, zadzwoń do nas na numer 0300 555 0600, wyślij nam wiadomość na WhatsApp na numer 07418 344603 lub wyślij e-mail na adres customerservices@onward.co.uk.

إذا كنت بحاجة إلى أي مساعدة في فهم هذه الوثيقة، فيرجى الاتصال بنا على 0600 555 0300، أو أرسل رسالة إلينا على رقم الواتس 344603 أو 07418 customerservices@onward.co.uk.

এই নথিটি বুঝতে আপনার যদি কোনো সাহায্যের প্রয়োজন হয়, তাহলে অনুগ্রহ করে আমাদের 0300 555 0600 নম্বরে একটি কল করুন, আমাদের হোয়াটিসঅ্যাপ -এ 07418 344603 নম্বরে একটি বার্তা পাঠান বা customerservices@onward.co.uk.

اگر برای درک این سند به کمک نیاز دارید، لطفاً با ما یا شماره 03005550600 تماس بگیرید، از طریق واتس‌اپ به شماره 07418 344603 یا customerservices@onward.co.uk.

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Haddii aad u baahan tahay in lagaa caawiyo fahamka dokumentigan, fadlan naga soo wac lambarkan 0300 555 0600, farriin noogu soo dir lambarkan WhatsApp-ta 07418 344603, ama email noogu soo dir customerservices@onward.co.uk.

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نمگر پیویست به پار ملی همچنان لام به لگامه، تکلیه پیویستیمان پیوی به ژماره تلفنی 03005550600، له و افسنہ پیویستیکمان بتو بتره به ژماره تلفنی 07418 344603 یان نیمه لیکمان بتو بتره بتو customerservices@onward.co.uk

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