

IRM Complaints Procedure for Agencies

This leaflet is for Fostering Service Providers or Adoption Agencies who have been through an IRM Review and who wish to make a complaint about the IRM office or the Review Panel.

The IRM is operated by Coram Children’s Legal Centre (CCLC) on behalf of the Secretary of State for Education.

We are committed to providing a high quality service and welcome feedback about the operation of both the IRM office and the Review Panels. We believe that positive and negative comments from applicants and agencies using the service will help us evaluate and improve the service.

We have a clear complaints procedure which can be used by applicants and agencies.

Can I make a complaint about the recommendation made by the IRM Review Panel?

No. This complaints procedure cannot be used if either party are unhappy with the actual recommendation made by the review panel.

What do I do if I wish to complain about the IRM?

You should contact the IRM office as we may be able to deal with the issue immediately.

If you have a complaint we would hope you would contact us within one month of the issue arising so we can deal with it effectively. On receipt we will respond to confirm the complaint has been received and may ask for further clarification.

We will try to resolve all complaints quickly and to everyone’s satisfaction. The IRM complaints procedure has two stages to try to ensure this can be achieved to the best of our ability.

Stage 1

All complaints will be dealt with by the IRM Contract Manager who will try to resolve the issue with you and confirm, in writing, the outcome of your complaint. This will be dealt with within 7 days of your complaint being received.

Stage 2

If you are not happy with the outcome of the Stage 1 complaint, you will need to write to the IRM Contract Manager within 7 days. You will need to give your reasons for being unhappy with the stage 1 response and explain how you would like the matter to be resolved.

Your complaint will then be passed to the Customer Services Manager at CCLC. They will either investigate the issue or arrange for a senior manager within the organisation.

You will be contacted as part of the investigation and a report will be prepared, which will decide whether the complaint is upheld and set out any actions required by the IRM as a result of the investigation.

This will be carried out within 14 days wherever possible. If we consider that a longer period will be needed, we will inform you of this.

You will then receive a letter from the investigator telling you the outcome of the investigation.

I am not happy with the outcome of my Stage 2 complaint. Can I pursue this further?

This completes the IRM complaints procedure, however if you remain dissatisfied you may wish to submit a complaint to the Parliamentary Ombudsman.

For more information or to download a form please visit their website www.ombudsman.org.uk. Alternatively you can email: phso.enquiries@ombudsman.org.uk or call 0345 015 4033 (8:30-5:30 Mon-Fri)

Or write to:
Parliamentary Ombudsman
Millbank Tower
Millbank
London
SW1P 4QP

What if my complaint is about the Contract Manager?

If your complaint relates to the IRM Contract Manager you should send your complaint directly to the Customer Services Manager, details below:

Customer Services Manager
Coram Children’s Legal Services
Coram Campus
41 Brunswick Square
London
WC1N 1AZ

Contact details for making a Stage 1 or 2 complaint:

Contract Manager
Independent Review Mechanism (IRM)
Unit 4
Pavilion Business Park
Royds Hall Road
Wortley
Leeds
LS12 6AJ

Tel: 0845 450 3956 / 0113 202 2080
Fax: 0845 450 3957 / 0113 263 7414
(charged at local rates)

irm@baaf.org.uk
www.independentreviewmechanism.org.uk