

NORTHERN IRELAND POLICING BOARD

INTERNAL DISPUTE RESOLUTION POLICY

INTERNAL DISPUTE RESOLUTION PROCEDURE

POLICY OWNER	Director of Police Pensions and Injury Benefits Directorate
HPE REFERENCE NUMBER	548284
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SECTION 1 | DOCUMENT PURPOSE & BACKGROUND

The Northern Ireland Policing Board (the **Policing Board**) manages the police pension scheme in Northern Ireland. The *Pensions (Northern Ireland) Order 1995* requires the Policing Board, as manager of the police pension scheme, to have in place formal dispute resolution arrangements.

These arrangements allow interested parties (listed at Section 2 of this document) to have their complaints formally investigated and to receive a written response from the Policing Board. This process is called the Internal Dispute Resolution Procedure (**IDRP**).

Complaints under the Policing Board's IDRP policy can relate to;

- an injury on duty award;
- an ill health or deferred pension;
- a survivor award;
- an adult dependant award;
- forfeiture of any of the above; and/or
- a child allowance

The purpose of this document is to explain the Policing Board's IDRP process as well as formalising existing arrangements in line with the statutory requirements under the *Pensions (Northern Ireland) Order 1995*.

SECTION 2 | WHO CAN MAKE AN IDRP COMPLAINT?

Complaints under the Policing Board's IDRP policy can be submitted by the following;

- Serving PSNI police officers;
- Former RUC/PSNI police officers;
- Widows, widowers, civil partners or adult partners of a deceased RUC/PSNI officer;
- A child or dependent of a former RUC/PSNI officer.

IDRP is available to current, active members of the Police Pension Scheme and/or the Injury on Duty Award Scheme. IDRP is also available to prospective members of these schemes. Applications can also be made on behalf of minors and made/continued in the event of an officer's death.

APPOINTED REPRESENTATIVES

If you wish for an appointed representative to manage a complaint on your behalf the Policing Board require Appointed Representative Form (Annex A) to be completed and returned. This form must be completed before the Policing Board can release any information we hold about you to another person. Examples of appointed representatives include a staff association member or a solicitor.

SECTION 3 HOW DO I MAKE AN IDRP COMPLAINT?

An application should be made in writing for your complaint to be processed under IDRP. Your complaint should contain as much detail as possible including any supporting information on the disagreement on which you are seeking a determination. You should also include your full name, address, date of birth and force number and clearly mark your application as a request under IDRP. Your finalised application should be marked for the attention of the Police Pensions and Injury Benefits Directorate (**PPIB**) who will consider all IDRP complaints.

In addition to the information above, an appointed representative acting on behalf of a complainant must also submit the Appointed Representative Form located at Annex A of this document.

Once a dispute has been referred to the Director of PPIB an acknowledgment will be issued confirming that the dispute has been received. The acknowledgment letter will outline timeframes for a decision and include details of the Pensions Ombudsman.

The decision by the Director of PPIB will be taken within 40 working days of the date of receipt of the dispute. The decision will be communicated within 15 working days thereafter. Where it is clear that this will not be possible, an interim reply will be sent, explaining why there is a delay and when a full reply can be expected.

The Director of PPIB's determination will set out the basis for the decision and where the dispute is upheld, will make directions for actions to be taken.

Please note: If you remain dissatisfied with the outcome of your complaint you may also wish to contact the Pensions Ombudsman. The Pensions Ombudsman retains legal powers to settle complaints and disputes. Contact details for the Pensions Ombudsman are located at the bottom of this document.

SECTION 4 HOW IS MY COMPLAINT PROCESSED?

A report detailing the facts and chronology of your case will be prepared by Policing Board officials. This report will also consider the points raised within your complaint. This report will then be passed to the Director of PPIB who will consider this together with all information held by the Policing Board in respect of your complaint. The Director of PPIB will use this information to reach a decision on all points raised within your complaint. The Director of PPIB will issue a response including direction on any actions to be taken.

SECTION 5 WHAT ARE THE IDRP TIME LIMITS?

Your complaint must be submitted to the Policing Board within six months of the date on which the subject matter of your complaint occurred.

SECTION 6 WHAT DISPUTES ARE EXCLUDED FROM IDR?

Please be advised that appeals under the following provisions are exempt from IDR;

- *Regulation H2 of the Royal Ulster Constabulary Pensions Regulations 1988;*
- *Regulation 30 of the PSNI and PSNI Reserve (Injury Benefit) Regulations 2006;*
- *Regulation 68 of the Police Pension (Northern Ireland) Regulations 2009; and*
- *Schedule 1, Paragraph 2 of the Police Pensions Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2015.*

Also exempt are any matters in which proceedings have been commenced in any court or tribunal, or where the Pensions Ombudsman has already commenced an investigation.

If, after an application for the resolution of a pension dispute has been made, the dispute becomes an exempted dispute, the resolution of the dispute under the IDR procedure ceases.

SECTION 7 WHO DO I ADDRESS MY IDR COMPLAINT TO?

Please ensure that correspondence is addressed to;

Director of Police Pensions and Injury Benefits Directorate (IDR)
James House
Block D
2 – 4 Cromac Avenue
The Gasworks
Belfast
BT7 2JA

SECTION 8 WILL MY COMPLAINT BE ACKNOWLEDGED?

Policing Board officials will issue a written acknowledgement of your complaint within 2 working days of it being received.

Within this acknowledgment letter the timeframe for a decision and response will be confirmed and you will also be provided with the contact details for the Pensions Advisory Service and the Pensions Ombudsman.

SECTION 8 USEFUL CONTACTS

If you remain dissatisfied with the outcome of your complaint you may also wish to contact the Pensions Ombudsman. The Pensions Ombudsman retains legal powers

to settle complaints and disputes. The Pensions Ombudsman can be contacted as follows;

Address	The Pensions Ombudsman 10 South Colonnade Canary Wharf London E14 4PU
Telephone	0800 917 4487
Website	https://www.pensions-ombudsman.org.uk/

ANNEX A

APPOINTED REPRESENTATIVE FORM

- I authorise _____ to act as my Appointed Representative (**AR**) in my complaint being raised under the Internal Dispute Resolution Procedure.
- I hereby acknowledge that any future correspondence regarding my application will be forwarded to my AR.
- I further acknowledge that any correspondence forwarded to my AR will be deemed to have been sent to me.
- I authorise my AR to act as the sole point of contact with the Policing Board and acknowledge that the Policing Board will communicate with me directly through my AR.

AR Full Name	
AR Organisation (if any)	
AR Address	
AR Relationship with the complaint	
AR Telephone Number	
AR E-mail address¹	

Complainant Signature	Date

Appointed Representative Signature	Date

¹ Please be advised that due to data protection measures the Policing Board will not communicate with you and/or your appointed representative by way of email.

-  028 9040 8500
-  information@nipolicingboard.org.uk
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DOCUMENT TITLE

Northern Ireland Policing Board
Internal Dispute Resolution Policy

DISCLAIMER

While every effort has been made to ensure the accuracy of the information contained in this document, the Northern Ireland Policing Board will not be held liable for any inaccuracies that may be contained within.