

## *Policy Circular*

**Document No 02/09**

**Owner:** Customer Service Team

**Subject:** Complaints Policy

**Version:** 3 of 3

**Last Amended:** 26 January 2009

**Date Reviewed:** 11 May 2011

**Next Review:** 1 June 2013

### **1.0 Background**

The Independent Living Fund aims to provide a high standard of service to all users. There may however be occasions where someone wishes to make a complaint. This policy outlines the ILF's complaints process.

### **2.0 Policy**

A complaint can be made verbally or in writing and should be referred to the Complaints and Decision Review team

An acknowledgement letter will be sent within 7 days of receipt at the ILF office

The Complaints Target is to provide an answer to all queries within 21 days from the date of receipt.

#### **Independent Living Fund**

Equinox House, Island Business Quarter, City Link, Nottingham NG2 4LA

Tel: 0845 601 8815 or 0115 945 0700, Fax: 0115 945 0945, Textphone: 0845 601 8816

Email: [funds@ilf.org.uk](mailto:funds@ilf.org.uk), Website: [www.dwp.gov.uk/ilf](http://www.dwp.gov.uk/ilf)

The Independent Living Fund is an Executive Non-Departmental Public Body of the Department for Work and Pensions

## **2.1 Second Tier Complaints**

If a user is unsatisfied with the response to their initial complaint a second tier complaint can be made.

A referral will be drafted incorporating details of the original decision and the complainants' argument.

The Senior Management Panel (SMP) at the ILF will consider the case. The SMP meet fortnightly and is made up of a panel of Senior Managers and Directors of the Independent Living Fund.

The complainant will be notified of the outcome of the SMP decision within 7 days of the meeting.

## **2.2 Appeals**

The final stage of the ILF's complaints procedure is a referral to the User Personal Case Committee (UPCC). The UPCC is a sub-committee of Trustees of the ILF and meets once a month. Meetings are held either by teleconference or in person.

If a complainant is not satisfied with the response from the SMP then a referral can be made to the UPCC. The Complaints and Decision Review team will initially draft the referral. A copy of this referral will be provided to the complainant to provide any extra comment.

The UPCC will consider the case and the complainant will be notified of their decision within 7 days from the date of the meeting.

## **2.3 Independent Case Examiner**

Where someone is unhappy with the outcome of the final stage of the ILF appeals process they can approach the Independent Case Examiner (ICE) to review their case. ICE can look into complaints about our service for example taking incorrect action or misinforming our users. Their service is free and impartial. They cannot look into complaints about our legislation or our policy.

## **2.4 Ombudsman**

The ILF falls under the jurisdiction of the Parliamentary and Health Services Ombudsman.

The Parliamentary and Health Services Ombudsman investigates complaints by members of the public who have suffered injustice because of maladministration by public organisations.

The Ombudsman does not normally investigate complaints if they have not been through the complaints procedure.

## **3.0 Ex-Gratia**

The ILF has the power to make ex-gratia payments to compensate for financial loss, gross inconvenience or gross embarrassment. When considering whether an ex-gratia payment should be made reference should be made to the “Ex-gratia Payments” policy.

## **4.0 Source**

Trustees Meeting 13.05.2009  
Amended Trustees meeting 10.06.2009

## **5.0 History Date Reviewed**

26 January 2009  
11 May 2011