



An Binse um Achomhairc i dtaobh Cosaint Idirnáisiúnta

*The International Protection Appeals Tribunal*

# IPAT CUSTOMER SERVICE ACTION PLAN 2024-2026

# Contents

INTRODUCTION BY THE CHAIR .....	3
<b>ABOUT THE TRIBUNAL</b> .....	4
Vision .....	5
Mission .....	5
Strategic Goals.....	5
Our Values .....	6
<b>ABOUT OUR CUSTOMER SERVICE ACTION PLAN</b> .....	6
Our Customers .....	6
Principals for Dealing with Customers .....	7
What to expect when you contact us.....	7
When you visit our offices.....	8
Confidentiality .....	9
Help us to help you.....	9
Administrative Practice Note .....	10
Services through Irish .....	10
Monitoring and Evaluation.....	10
<b>CUSTOMER COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE</b> .....	11
<b>HOW TO CONTACT US:</b> .....	11

## **INTRODUCTION BY THE CHAIR**

I am very pleased to introduce the Tribunal's Customer Service Charter and Action Plan. This is an important guide to the high standard of service you can expect from the Tribunal. The core Public Service values of integrity, honesty and impartiality are at the heart of everything we do and we expect our service to exemplify those values in its treatment of you, the customer.

The Tribunal has undergone many challenges in recent years and we are committed to an ongoing process of innovation and improvement so that we can continue to deliver excellence.

In the context of the development of our strategic plans, we re-evaluate our services, listen closely to stakeholder perspectives, and adapt to new circumstances, for example, by facilitating online hearings and moving to other digital ways of working. We aim to continue to streamline our appeals system to make it more user-friendly in the digital age. As we continue to grow and adapt, we welcome your valuable feedback on what we can do better.

Hilkka Becker

Chairperson

The purpose of this Customer Service Action Plan is to set out the standard of service customers can expect from our organisation. Our Customer Charter (below) will be displayed on posters across the public areas of our offices. Our Charter sets out our commitment to you and provides information on how to contact us, provide feedback, or make a complaint. The Charter can also be found on our website [here](#)

**An Binse um Achomhairc i dtaobh Cosaint Idirnáisiúnta**  
*The International Protection Appeals Tribunal*

**CUSTOMER SERVICE CHARTER**

**OUR COMMITMENT TO YOU:**

- We will treat you with courtesy, fairness and respect at all times.
- We will try to reply to all queries quickly.
- We will keep our policies and information relevant and up-to-date.
- We will use easy-to-understand language on our website and when writing to you.
- We will respect the privacy and confidentiality of your personal information.
- We will treat all our customers equally.

**WE ASK THAT YOU:**

- Respond to requests for additional documentation as quickly as possible.
- Quote your Reference numbers when you write to us.
- Give full and accurate information when you contact us.
- Attend your hearing on time.
- Treat our staff with courtesy and respect.

**OUR WEBSITE**

[WWW.PROTECTIONAPPEALS.IE](http://WWW.PROTECTIONAPPEALS.IE)

**QUERIES? COMPLAINTS? WE WANT YOUR FEEDBACK**

The International Protection Appeals Tribunal  
 6/7 Hanover Street East  
 Dublin  
 D02 W320  
 Ireland.

Phone: +353 (0) 1 474 8400  
 Freephone: +1800 201 458  
 Email: [info@protectionappeals.ie](mailto:info@protectionappeals.ie)

Find our Customer Action Plan [here](#)

## ABOUT THE TRIBUNAL

The International Protection Appeals Tribunal was established on the 31st of December 2016, in accordance with [Section 61 of the International Protection Act 2015](#), to determine appeals and other functions under the International Protection Act 2015 and the Dublin System Regulations. The Tribunal is independent in the performance of its functions.

The Tribunal determines appeals from decisions in respect of:

- International protection – refugee status and subsidiary protection;
- Inadmissibility of an application for international protection;

- Consent to make a subsequent application for international protection;
- Transfer orders under the Dublin Regulation; and
- Reception conditions in the international protection process, including labour market access.

## Vision

Our vision is to be a model appellate decision-making authority delivering excellence.

## Mission

To provide an effective remedy within the international protection system that is of the highest quality and to do so in the most efficient, sustainable and user-focussed manner, ensuring compliance with national, EU and international law

## Strategic Goals

The Tribunal will strive to determine all appeals:

- in accordance with the law;
- in accordance with fairness and natural justice;
- with respect for the dignity and privacy of applicants;
- efficiently;
- with the highest standard of professional competence;
- in a spirit of openness and transparency in how the appeals process is managed.

## Our Values

**Fairness**  
Independence  
Impartiality  
Integrity  
Justness

**Efficiency**  
Productivity  
Timeliness  
Expertise  
Value for money

**Transparency**  
Clarity  
Openness  
Understanding  
Responsiveness

**Respectfulness**  
Dignity  
Courteousness  
Consideration  
User-focus

## ABOUT OUR CUSTOMER SERVICE ACTION PLAN

### Our Customers

The customers of the Tribunal are made up of various different groups, namely;

- Appellants who apply to the Tribunal for an appeal of their first instance recommendation
- Solicitors & Barristers who are representing their clients
- Officers from the International Protection Office
- Representatives from Tusla
- Representatives from the UNHCR
- Witnesses, family members or other parties who may be called to attend an appeal hearing
- Public callers to our offices
- Staff of the Tribunal itself

## Principals for Dealing with Customers

To help ensure a consistently high standard of service, we will adopt the following **principles for dealing with customers:**

- We will treat you with courtesy, fairness and respect at all times.
- We will aim to respond to all queries quickly.
- We will keep our policies and information relevant and up-to-date.
- We will use easy-to-understand language on our website and when we write to you.
- We will respect the privacy and confidentiality of your personal information.
- We will treat everyone equally.
- We will continuously monitor and improve our in-person and our digital facilities to ensure we are providing you with the most efficient and high quality service.

## What to expect when you contact us

### When you contact us by letter or email

We will reply to all correspondence politely and as soon as possible. We aim to:

- Acknowledge all correspondence **within 5 working days of receipt.**
- Issue a detailed response to all correspondence **within 20 working days\***, where we can.

\*some correspondence may require consultation with offices/agencies associated with the Tribunal and/or considerable research of a legal nature before a full response can be issued.

- Where relevant, we will include a contact name, division, telephone number, and e-mail address when replying to you.
- We will write to you in plain language, using technical and official terms only where this is necessary.

### When you contact us by telephone

We aim to:

- Answer all calls promptly and politely. Staff will identify themselves to the caller.

- Ensure you receive a return phone call from the relevant staff member, if your query cannot be dealt with on the first call.
- Make it easy for you to contact us: A "lo-call" number is available to allow members of the public to contact the Tribunal from any part of the country. The number is: **1800 201 458** and is available between the hours of 9am-5pm, Monday-Friday.

## **Our Information**

- We will do our best to provide relevant and up-to-date information on the business of the Tribunal via our online services, strategy statements and annual reports, all of which can be found on our [website](#).
- Information will be provided in a clear easy-to-read format using simple language.
- We will commit to the continuous improvement of our online services allowing our customers to use enhanced digital services in the future.
- If you have an appeal before the Tribunal, we will inform you and/or your legal representative - by letter or email - of the date, time and location of your appeal hearing, any updates regarding your appeal, as well as ultimately, the decision on your appeal.
- All information about the appeals process, can be found on our [website](#)

## **When you visit our offices**

### **Personal Callers**

- You will be greeted politely and we will deal with your enquiry as efficiently as we can.
- When personal callers arrive by prior appointment, an appropriate staff member will greet them punctually.
- All areas open to personal callers will be maintained to acceptable standards of cleanliness and comfort.



## Accessibility

- The Tribunal's offices have been made as accessible as possible to people with disabilities.
- **Access Officer**

An Access Officer has been appointed by the Dept. of Justice and is available to help provide, arrange or coordinate assistance to persons with disabilities who wish to access the services provided by IPAT. The Access Officer also acts as a point of contact for persons with disabilities who wish to access such services.

**Access Officer,  
Department of Justice,  
51 St Stephen's Green  
Dublin 2, DO2 HK52**

**Phone:** +353 (0) 1 602 8202

**Email:** [accessofficer@justice.ie](mailto:accessofficer@justice.ie)

## Confidentiality

- Our offices, audio visual services and hearing rooms have been set up in order to conduct all appeal hearings in a fully confidential manner.
- We offer consultation rooms (subject to demand) so that you can meet with your legal representative in private prior to your hearing.
- All information provided by you will be treated in a confidential manner, insofar as is possible and in a manner that respects your dignity.

## Help us to help you

To assist the Tribunal in providing a quality service to you, we ask that you:

- Respond to our requests for additional documentation as quickly as possible.
- Quote your reference numbers, Personal Identification Numbers (PID) in all correspondence/communication to us.
- Give full and accurate information when you contact us.

- Attend your Tribunal hearing (whether onsite or virtual) on time.
- Treat our staff with courtesy and respect.

## Administrative Practice Note

- To assist all parties appearing before it, the Tribunal Chairperson has issued an [Administrative Practice Note](#) which is available on the Tribunal's website.
- The Practice note provides information on various aspects of our practices and procedures and it is recommended that parties appearing before the Tribunal read it.

## Services through Irish

### Seirbhís Trí Ghaeilge

- Tabharfar freagra i nGaeilge ar chomhfhreagras a gheofar i nGaeilge.
- Déanfar gach iarracht freastal ar fhiafraithe teileafóin i nGaeilge agus freastal ar dhaoine a thagann i láthair ar mian leo an ngnó a dhéanamh trí Ghaeilge.

### Services Through Irish

- Correspondence received in Irish will be answered in Irish.
- Every effort will be made to accommodate telephone callers and personal callers who wish to conduct their business through Irish.

## Monitoring and Evaluation

### How we monitor and report on our Performance

- We will measure and assess our performance against the commitments we have agreed in our Charter.
- We will report on our performance in our Annual Report which will be available on our website.

## CUSTOMER COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

### Customer Liaison Officer

- We welcome feedback on our Customer Action Plan and your suggestions on how we can improve our services.
- Complaints relating to customer service in the Tribunal should be directed to: **The Customer Liaison Officer** via our email address. (See below)
- The Customer Liaison Officer will also arrange to process complaints/comments that may be received, whether formally or informally, by other staff members.

### Complaints Procedure

- When a complaint is received, we aim to provide a reply to confirm that we received it **within 5 working days**, and a detailed reply **within 20 working days**.
- Information regarding the complaints procedure will be circulated widely to people and organisations in regular contact with the Tribunal, and access to the procedure will be kept as simple as possible.
- You should be aware that the decisions related to appeals are excluded from the complaints procedure, as such decisions are confidential and an applicant has a right of judicial review to the High Court.

## HOW TO CONTACT US:

### The International Protection Appeals Tribunal

6/7 Hanover Street East

Dublin

D02 W320

Ireland.

**Phone:** +353 (0) 1 474 8400

**Freephone:** +1800 201 458

**Email:** [info@protectionappeals.ie](mailto:info@protectionappeals.ie)

*It should be noted that the Tribunal Customer Service Action Plan and Customer Charter standards are not intended to create or confer any new legal rights for customers of the Tribunal. ENDS*