



An Binse um Achomhairc i dtaobh Cosaint Idirnáisiúnta

The International Protection Appeals Tribunal

The International Protection Appeals Tribunal (IPAT)

Customer Service Charter and Action Plan 2025–2027



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Introduction by the Tribunal Chairperson

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. We expect our service to follow these values in how it treats you, the customer.

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

We continually assess our services, listen closely to stakeholder viewpoints, and adapt to new circumstances. This can be seen in how we now enable online hearings and are moving to other digital ways of working. We aim to continue to streamline our appeals system to make it more user-friendly. As we continue to grow and adapt, we welcome your valuable feedback on what we can do better.

Hilkka Becker

Chairperson



The Purpose of our Customer Service Action Plan

The purpose of this Customer Service Action Plan is to set out the standard of service customers can expect from us.

You can see our Customer Charter on posters across the public areas of our offices. ([See the poster on page 15 of this document.](#))

Our Charter:

- sets out our commitment to you; and
- tells you how to contact us, provide feedback, or make a complaint.

You can also find our Charter in the [Contact Us](#) section of our website.

About the Tribunal

The International Protection Appeals Tribunal determines appeals from decisions about:

- **International protection – refugee status and subsidiary protection**

Refugee status means you must be a person who has a well-founded fear of being persecuted because of one or more of the following reasons:

- race
- religion
- nationality
- political opinion **or**
- membership of a particular social group.

You must also be:

- outside your country of nationality and be unable or, because of fear, be unwilling to accept the protection of that country;
- or**
- be a stateless person, who, being outside of your country of former habitual residence is unable or, because of fear, unwilling to return to it.

Subsidiary Protection is granted where a person does not qualify as a refugee but where the person faces a real risk of suffering ‘serious harm’ in their country of origin.

- **Inadmissibility of an application for international protection**

This is where a person's application for protection was not accepted for processing by the International Protection Office, as it did not meet conditions that needed to be met. This could happen if another EU country, or another country outside the EU, has already granted you refugee status or subsidiary protection, and you can avail of protection in that country. If your application was not accepted for processing, you can appeal this decision to the Tribunal.

- **Consent to possibly make an application for international protection (subsequent applications)**

This is where the Minister gives a person permission to make a second or further ("subsequent") application for international protection. If consent is refused, you can appeal this decision to the Tribunal.

- **Transfer orders under the Dublin III Regulation**

This Regulation helps an International Protection Officer (IPO) decide which country is responsible for processing an international protection (IP) application.

You could be transferred to another country if:

- you have made an IP application in another country before you applied in Ireland, and
- the IPO decides that another country is responsible for your IP application.

If a decision is made to transfer you to another country, you can appeal to the Tribunal.

If you believe that Ireland is responsible for your protection claim, you may appeal the decision to transfer you to the other country. You may make your appeal to the International Protection Appeals Tribunal.

- **Reception conditions in the international protection process, including labour market access**

Reception conditions include things like housing, food and clothing.

Labour market access is about whether a person is allowed to work in Ireland, and conditions around this.

The Tribunal is independent in the performance of its functions. This means it carries out its duties without influence from any external pressures. This ensures fair decisions in accordance with the law.

The Tribunal is in place since 31 December 2016 and operates under the International Protection Act 2015 and the Dublin III Regulation.



Our vision

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

Simply put, this means we want to provide an excellent service to all our users and to issue decisions that are of the highest possible quality.



Our 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-focused manner, ensuring compliance with national, EU and international law.”

Simply put, our mission is to provide a service within the international protection system that is:

- high quality;
- efficient;
- sustainable (will last);
- customer focused; and
- in line with national, EU and international law.



Our strategic goals

The Tribunal has 6 main goals. These goals help it to determine (decide on) all appeals. Its goals are to work:

- in line with the law;
- in a fair and unbiased way (natural justice);
- with respect for the dignity and privacy of applicants;
- efficiently;
- with the highest standard of professional competence; and
- 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

Respect

Dignity
Courtesy
Consideration
User focus

About our Customer Service Action Plan

Our customers

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

- Appellants: people who appeal to the Tribunal against the first recommendation or decision in their case. The first recommendation is made by an International Protection Officer (IPO). If appellants receive a negative recommendation or decision from an IPO officer, they can appeal to the Tribunal.
- Solicitors and barristers who are representing their clients (appellants).
- Presenting Officers from the Department of Justice.
- Representatives from Tusla, the Child and Family Agency in Ireland.
- Representatives from the UNHCR – United Nations Refugee Agency.
- Witnesses, family members or other parties who may be called to attend an appeal hearing.
- Public callers to our offices.
- Staff of the Tribunal.
- Tribunal Members.

Principles for dealing with customers

To make sure we provide a consistently high standard of service, we follow these principles:

- We will treat you with courtesy, fairness and respect at all times.
- We will try 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 when we write to you and over the phone.
- We will respect the privacy and confidentiality of your personal information.
- We will treat everyone equally.
- We will continually monitor and improve our in-person and our digital facilities to make sure 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 receiving it**;
- send a detailed response to all correspondence **within 20 working days**, where we can. (Some correspondence may mean we have to consult with offices or agencies associated with the Tribunal and/or do considerable legal research before we can send you a full response.);
- where relevant, we will include a contact name, division, telephone number, and e-mail address when replying to you; and
- write to you in plain language, explaining any technical and official terms that we may need to use.

When you contact us by telephone

We aim to:

- answer all calls promptly and politely and to clearly identify ourselves;
- make sure you receive a return phone call from the relevant staff member, if your query cannot be dealt with on the first call; and

- 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 this line is open from 9am–5pm, Monday-Friday.

When you visit our offices

Personal callers

- We will greet you politely.
- We will deal with your enquiry as efficiently as we can.
- When personal callers arrive to an appointment, an appropriate staff member will greet them on time as agreed.
- All areas open to personal callers will be maintained to acceptable standards of cleanliness and comfort.

Accessibility

- **Our offices:** The Tribunal's offices have been made as accessible as possible to people with disabilities.
- **Access Officer:** An Access Officer is available to help provide, arrange or coordinate assistance to persons with disabilities who wish to access the services provided by IPAT.

Access Officer

Department of Justice

51 St Stephen's Green

Dublin 2, D02 HK52

Phone: +353 (0) 1 602 8202

Email: accessofficer@justice.ie

Our information

- We will do our best to provide relevant and up-to-date information on the business of the Tribunal using our online services, strategy statements and annual reports, all of which you can find on our [website](#).
- We will provide information in a clear, easy-to-read format using plain English.
- We will commit to the continual improvement of our online services so our customers can more easily access and use 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. We will also tell you about the decision on your appeal.

You can find all information about the appeals process on our [website](#).

Confidentiality

- Our offices, audio visual services and Tribunal hearing rooms have been set up so all appeal hearings are conducted in a fully confidential manner.
- We offer consultation rooms (when available) so that you can meet with your legal representative in private before your hearing.
- We treat all information you provide to us as confidential, 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.
- Include your Personal Identification Numbers (PIDs) in all correspondence or other 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 parties appearing before the Tribunal, there is a legal document called an [Administrative Practice Note](#) on the Tribunal's website. You will need a legal expert to help understand this Note.
- This Note gives information on various aspects of our practices and procedures. For example, it tells you how to submit (send us) an appeal, what to do if an appeal is going to be sent late, and the rules for documents. We recommend that all parties appearing before the Tribunal understand this Note.

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

If you correspond with us through Irish, we will reply in Irish.

We will make every effort to use Irish with people who call or visit our office and want to carry out 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.

How to make a complaint

Customer Liaison Officer

- Our Customer Liaison Officer welcomes feedback on our Customer Action Plan and your suggestions about how we can improve our services.
- Direct complaints relating to customer service in the Tribunal to: **The Customer Liaison Officer** using our email address (see next page).
- The Customer Liaison Officer will also arrange to process complaints or comments that may be received, whether formally or informally, by other staff members.

Complaints procedure

- When we receive a complaint, we aim to reply confirming we received it **within 5 working days** and then provide a detailed reply **within 20 working days**.
- We will send information about our complaints procedure to people and organisations in regular contact with the Tribunal and keep access to the procedure as simple as possible.

Important: We do not deal with complaints about decisions related to appeals through our complaints procedure. These decisions are confidential.

An appellant has a right of judicial review to the High Court. A judicial review is proceedings in which a court is asked to rule on a decision of the Tribunal. This happens when the decision is being challenged by the appellant or their legal representative.

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

We offer our phone services from 9 in the morning until 5 in the afternoon.

Important: The Tribunal Customer Service Action Plan and Customer Charter standards are not intended to create or confer [grant] any new legal rights for customers of the Tribunal. Your legal representative will be able to help you to understand your legal rights.

Customer Service Charter

Welcome to the International Protection Appeals Tribunal

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.
- Use your Personal Identification Numbers (PIDs) when you write to us.
- Give full and accurate information when you contact us.
- Be on time for your hearing.
- Treat our staff with courtesy and respect.

Queries? Complaints? We want your Feedback

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

Freephone: +1800 201 458
Email:
info@protectionappeals.ie

View our **Customer Service Action Plan** using the QR CODE below



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