

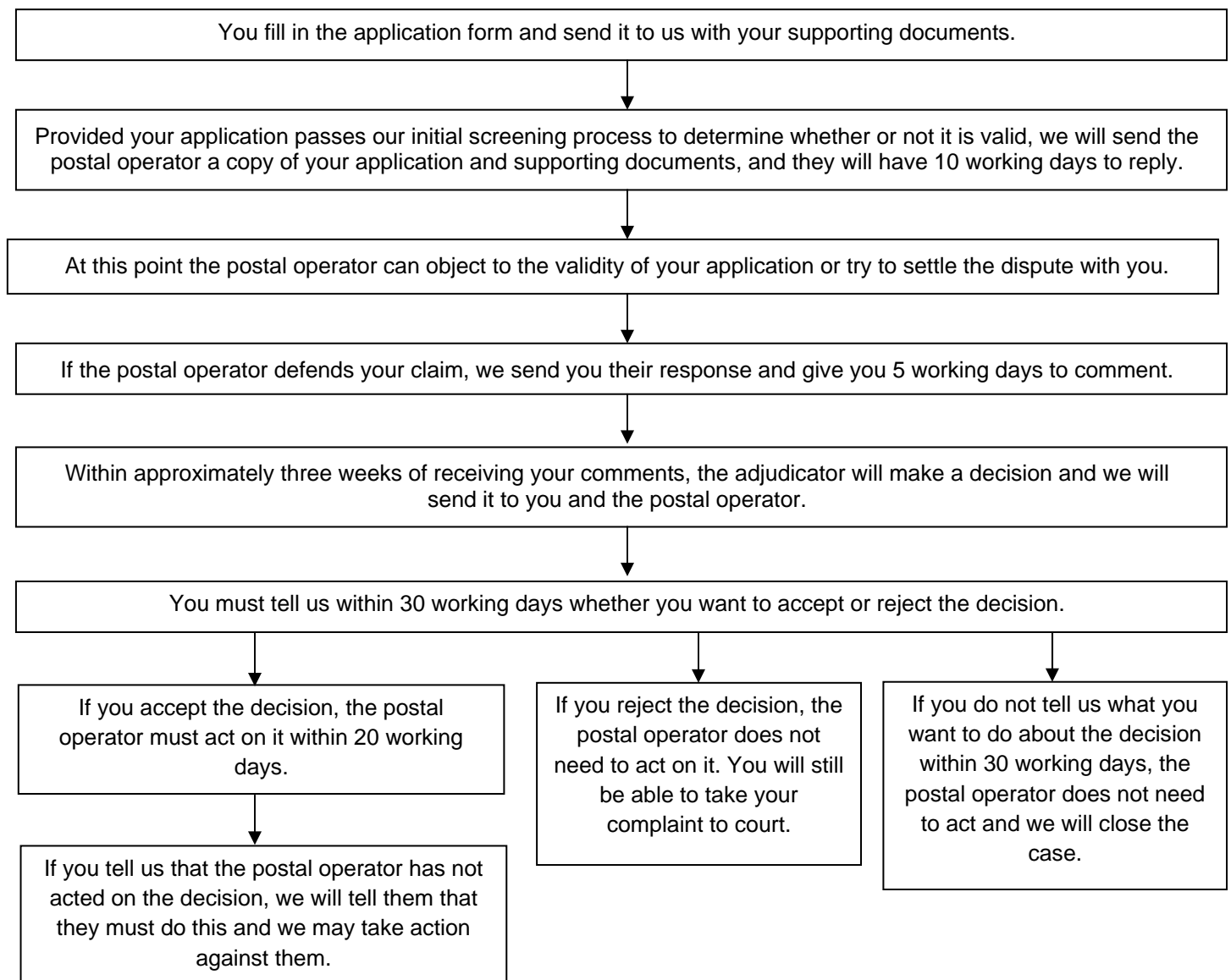
INFORMATION FOR CUSTOMERS
(For applications made on or after 17 August 2015)

Introduction

The Postal Redress Service (POSTRS) is a free and independent ADR service approved by Ofcom (the postal services regulator) to resolve disputes between postal operators that are members of the scheme and their customers. POSTRS is run by IDRS. The only costs you might have to pay are for the phone calls you make to us (at standard rates), photocopying, or postage costs associated with filling in the forms and providing documents.

For a full list of postal operators that are members of the scheme and the Rules that govern the way in which POSTRS operates, visit www.postrs.org.uk.

Procedure for a typical POSTRS case



Note: It is important that you fill in all parts of the application form as carefully as possible and provide any documents that you think will support your case. The adjudicator's decision will be based on the information that you and the postal operator provide.

Some questions and answers

How do I know if the postal operator I am complaining about is a subscriber of POSTRS?

For a full list of postal operators that subscribe to the scheme, or to apply to use POSTRS, please visit our website at www.postrs.org.uk.

Do I need a solicitor?

You do not need a solicitor but you can have one if you want. However, you cannot claim any charges your solicitor may make for their services.

I have a complaint about a postal operator that subscribes to POSTRS. What should I do?

You must give the postal operator a chance to settle your complaint before you apply to use POSTRS. You can do this by following the postal operator's formal complaints procedure and contacting their complaints department.

You can apply to use POSTRS if:

- you have not been able to settle your complaint through the postal operator's complaints procedure; or
- the postal operator has referred you to the scheme.

Is there a time limit on when I can apply to use POSTRS?

You must normally send your application to us within twelve months of the date on which the postal operator advises you that it is unable to resolve your complaint.

What can POSTRS make the postal operator do?

If the adjudicator agrees with your complaint, he or she can tell the postal operator to do any or all of the following:

- Give you an apology.
- Give you a product or service, or take some practical action that will benefit you.
- Pay you compensation for the loss you may have suffered as a result of using the postal operator's products or services. This must be within the limits set out in the terms and conditions of the relevant product or service used.
- Pay you an amount for any stress or inconvenience you suffered as a result of the way in which the postal operator handled your complaint. This amount must be no more than £50.00.

Who makes the decision on my complaint?

The decision will be made by an adjudicator who has received training in dealing with the types of complaints POSTRS covers, as well as legal training (particularly relating to consumer matters). There is detailed information on each adjudicator on the POSTRS website.

How does the adjudicator decide on how much compensation to award?

The adjudicator will take account of how much you have claimed, all of the circumstances you and the postal operator have described in the evidence you both provided, and the terms and conditions of the product or service used. The adjudicator will also consider the law and any relevant customer service standards. The adjudicator will always consider your arguments and evidence (as well as the postal operator's) and will make a fair and reasonable decision.

When considering whether to award compensation for any stress or inconvenience you may have suffered as a result of how your complaint was handled, the adjudicator will take account of the following:

- How much you have claimed in your application.
- What you have said about the degree of stress or inconvenience you may have suffered and whether it could have been avoided or its effects reduced.
- What the postal operator says about your claim and how they have behaved towards you.

If the adjudicator decides that your complaint was not handled in line with the postal operator's published standards, the adjudicator may award compensation. You should be aware that the amount of compensation awarded must be in proportion to all the circumstances of the case.

What if the postal operator and I decide to settle my complaint?

You and the postal operator can settle the dispute between yourselves at any time before the adjudicator makes a decision. If you decide to do this, you and the postal operator must negotiate a settlement with each other directly, not through POSTRS.

If you do negotiate a settlement, we need the postal operator to let us know in writing. If the postal operator does not keep to the terms of a settlement, you can ask us to re-open the case.

What if the postal operator gives me everything I asked for?

The postal operator must tell us that they have done this, at which point we will close the case.

What happens when I receive the decision?

You will have 20 working days to let us know whether you accept it. If you do not tell us within 20 working days, the postal operator will not have to abide by the decision, but you can still take the matter to court.

If I accept the decision within 20 working days, when will the postal operator take the necessary action?

The postal operator must act on the decision within 20 working days of the date you told us you accepted the decision.

What happens if the postal operator does not take the necessary action?

We would like to hear from you should the postal operator not comply with the decision within 20 working days of it being accepted. As the adjudicator's decision has been accepted, it is binding on the postal operator. However, please note that POSTRS does not have an enforcement or regulatory function. The independent regulator for the postal industry is Ofcom.

I have a complaint with a POSTRS subscriber but they say I cannot use POSTRS. Why?

If your complaint is about one of the following matters, POSTRS cannot deal with it:

- Matters already being dealt with by the courts or under any other complaints procedure.
- Business decisions a postal operator has made on whether or not to provide a product or service, and the terms under which they will provide a product or service.
- Products and services you purchased under a contract with the postal operator.
- Complaints that POSTRS considers to be frivolous and/or vexatious.

If you would like more information, visit the 'Frequently Asked Questions' section at www.postrs.org.uk or call us on 0207 520 3766. If you are hard of hearing and have a textphone, call 0207 520 3767.