

CEDR Complaints Procedure

Guide to Goodwill Payments

CEDR takes all complaints about the quality of our service seriously. If you have cause to make a complaint about our customer service, and CEDR agrees the service was not as good as it could have been, then we will look to put things right. CEDR will consider making a gesture of goodwill to you, in the form of a monetary payment, where we accept that we have not met the standards that we aim for. This Guide is here to help you understand what we may consider in deciding whether or not to make a goodwill payment for any inconvenience or distress caused by a mistake we have made. It is a guidance document only, and does not represent a policy or process.

What is a goodwill payment for?

Goodwill payments represent a tangible expression of our regret if the level of customer service we provided fell below the standard you were entitled to expect and this had a personal impact on you. This could include:

- **inconvenience** – this might include the time you have spent and the effort you have made in complaining about a mistake or error made by CEDR.
- **distress** – including any anxiety, disappointment, upset or stress that you experienced as a result of an administration error made by CEDR.
- **how your complaint was handled** – including whether or not CEDR responded appropriately and took your complaint seriously once it was brought to our attention.

What do I have to show in order to be eligible for a goodwill payment?

In your complaint, you should clearly set out how the service provided to you by our Case Officers caused you inconvenience and/or distress. There is a table below setting out “aggravating” and “mitigating” factors.

How does CEDR decide whether to make a goodwill payment and for how much?

When assessing a complaint about CEDR’s service (administration or customer service received by our Case Officers), CEDR will first decide whether or not the service that CEDR provided to you met the standards that we aim for. If we find that we provided an acceptable standard of service, we will not offer a goodwill payment. However, if we find that we did not meet those standards, we will always consider whether it is fair and reasonable to offer a goodwill payment.

If we do offer a goodwill payment, we will consider the impact that CEDR’s actions have had on you – which could be moderate, significant, serious or very serious. The impact of CEDR’s actions on you must be more than just minor inconvenience or upset.

If I have been caused minor inconvenience and/or distress, will I receive a goodwill payment?

If we find that you have been caused only minor inconvenience and/or distress, a goodwill payment will not ordinarily be offered. It may be more appropriate for CEDR to provide you with an apology or to take some other action to put things right.

| Tiers of inconvenience and distress | |
|-------------------------------------|--------------|
| Tier 1: moderate | Up to £50 |
| Tier 2: significant | £50 - £100 |
| Tier 3: serious | £100 - £200 |
| Tier 4: very serious | £200 - £300* |

** In very exceptional circumstances, a higher amount may be offered.*

Examples

A customer requested a call-back from a CEDR team member three days later, but the team member forgot to do this. This was considered to have caused **moderate** inconvenience and distress, leading to a goodwill offer of £20.

A complaint was made about a customer service shortfall, which was not recognised at the Stage 1 complaint review stage. The shortfall was recognised only at Stage 2, after the complainant escalated the complaint. This would be considered to have caused **significant** inconvenience, so the complainant was offered a goodwill payment of £75.

The customer emailed an additional photograph to be considered as part of their case, but only a section of the photograph was scanned in due to an administrative oversight on CEDR's part. Therefore, the adjudicator only had some visibility of the photograph, which caused further delay to the outcome being issued. This would be considered to have caused **serious** inconvenience and distress, so the complainant was offered a goodwill payment of £100.

Tier 4 covers situations where there have been multiple failings on case. For example, missed call backs by managers, messages being left unanswered, incorrect advice or administration on a case, complaints not addressed at stage 1, delays in sending a subject access request. This would be considered to have caused **very serious** inconvenience and distress, so the complainant was offered a goodwill payment of £220.

| Goodwill payments for inconvenience and distress | | |
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| | Mitigating factors (reducing the amount) | Aggravating factors (increasing the amount) |
| Nature of complaint | CEDR's failure is isolated and not part of a recurring pattern | Repeated failings experienced or failing occurred over a protracted period |
| | The failure is of a relatively minor nature | The failure is of a serious nature |
| Impact on complainant | No impact reported or impact insignificant | Complainant reports distress caused directly by CEDR's error (at the time or ongoing), including anxiety and disappointment |
| | Distress or inconvenience is slight | Complainant reports significant inconvenience, including expenditure of time and/or effort that has resulted from the issues complained about |
| CEDR's response to the complaint | Evidence that complaint has been taken seriously (e.g. proper investigation, attempts to resolve expeditiously) | Lack of evidence that the complaint has been taken seriously |
| | Tone of responses was constructive, empathetic and sincere | Tone of responses was unhelpful to the resolution of the complaint |
| | Attempts made to remedy at an early stage (e.g. sincere apology, steps to rectify) | Little evidence of attempts to remedy |
| | Responses were provided within a reasonable timeframe | Excessive or unexplained delays, or a failure to respond to the complaint |
| | Action reported to prevent recurrence/improve services and/or identify shortfalls | Complainant was required to take additional or unnecessary steps |
| Complainant's actions | Complainants approach created undue challenges (e.g. rudeness, aggressiveness, vexatious behaviour) | Complainant followed the complaints process and responded to requests for further information |
| | Delays in resolving the matter partly caused by the Complainant | Delays caused by the Complainant were unavoidable |