

How to complain effectively

Complaints timescales

The Housing Ombudsman has a Complaints Handling Code which your landlord must follow. This has fixed timescales for them to respond to your complaint.

Stage 1 complaint

5 working days

The landlord must acknowledge your submitted stage 1 complaint in 5 working days.

10 working days

The landlord has 10 working days to respond to your stage 1 complaint. The landlord can extend this by another 10 working days if necessary, but you must be told and given a reason for this.

Stage 2 (appeal)

If you are unhappy with the response you can escalate to Stage 2 (also called an appeal). You don't have to give a reason for this, but the Ombudsman recommends that landlords try to understand your dissatisfaction. And although it's not a requirement, it helps your case if you explain it clearly.

Stage 2 responses must be handled by someone who was not involved in the Stage 1 response – usually a more senior or independent officer within the landlord's organisation.

5 working days

The landlord must acknowledge your request to escalate the complaint, within 5 working days.

20 working days

The landlord has 20 working days to respond to your stage 2 complaint. The landlords can extend this by another 10 working days if necessary but you must be told and given a reason for this.

If you are still unhappy with the response, you have up to 12 months from the date of the landlord's final response to take your case to the Housing Ombudsman.

