



Home Office

Criminal casework

Handling telephone calls to duty officer numbers

Handling telephone calls to duty officer numbers

About this guidance

<p>About this guidance</p> <p>Service operation times and staff training</p> <p>Informing correspondents of contact details</p> <p>Out of hours messages</p> <p>Handling an initial call</p> <p>General call handling and protection of information</p> <p>Handling different types of call</p> <p>Dealing with abusive and persistent calls</p> <p>Follow up actions after finishing a call</p> <p>Dealing with complaints</p>	<p>This guidance tells you about the telephone contact service provided by criminal casework to foreign national offenders (FNOs), their representatives, and the Home Office's strategic partners.</p> <p>To improve the Home Office's service to these groups of people, each caseworking area has a duty officer contact number. This telephone number provides a contact point for a team when the named case owner is not known, or is unavailable. It has an out-of-hours message, saying the office is closed and giving details of normal operating hours.</p> <p>For more information on the operation and administration of the duty number service, see links on left.</p> <p>Changes to this guidance – This page tells you what has changed since the previous version of this guidance.</p> <p>Contact - This page tells you who to contact for help if your senior caseworker or line manager can't answer your question.</p> <p>Information owner – This page tells you about this version of the guidance and who owns it.</p> <p>Safeguard and promote child welfare – This page explains your duty to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and tells you where to find more information.</p>	<p>In this section</p> <p>Changes to this guidance</p> <p>Contact</p> <p>Information owner</p> <p>Related links</p> <p>Links to staff intranet removed</p>
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Handling telephone calls to duty officer numbers

Changes to this guidance

<p>About this guidance</p> <p>Service operation times and staff training</p> <p>Informing correspondents of contact details</p> <p>Out of hours messages</p> <p>Handling an initial call</p> <p>General call handling and protection of information</p> <p>Handling different types of call</p> <p>Dealing with abusive and persistent calls</p> <p>Follow up actions after finishing a call</p> <p>Dealing with complaints</p>	<p>This page lists the changes to the 'Handling telephone calls to duty officer numbers' guidance, with the most recent at the top.</p> <table border="1"><thead><tr><th data-bbox="490 392 831 427">Date of the change</th><th data-bbox="831 392 1532 427">Details of the change</th></tr></thead><tbody><tr><td data-bbox="490 427 831 842">9 December 2013</td><td data-bbox="831 427 1532 842">Six month review by the modernised guidance team:<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Informing correspondents of contact details:<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ eighth paragraph changed• Dealing with complaints:<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ postal and email addresses for complaints changed• Minor housekeeping changes.</td></tr><tr><td data-bbox="490 842 831 1034">11 June 2013</td><td data-bbox="831 842 1532 1034">Six month review by the modernised guidance team:<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Minor housekeeping changes.</td></tr><tr><td data-bbox="490 1034 831 1182"></td><td data-bbox="831 1034 1532 1182">For previous changes to this guidance you will find all earlier versions in the archive. See related link: Handling telephone calls to duty officer numbers - Archive.</td></tr></tbody></table>	Date of the change	Details of the change	9 December 2013	Six month review by the modernised guidance team: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Informing correspondents of contact details:<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ eighth paragraph changed• Dealing with complaints:<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ postal and email addresses for complaints changed• Minor housekeeping changes.	11 June 2013	Six month review by the modernised guidance team: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Minor housekeeping changes.		For previous changes to this guidance you will find all earlier versions in the archive. See related link: Handling telephone calls to duty officer numbers - Archive.	<p>Related links</p> <p>Informing correspondents of contact details</p> <p>Dealing with complaints</p> <p>See also</p> <p>Contact</p> <p>Information owner</p> <p>Links to staff intranet removed</p>
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Handling telephone calls to duty officer numbers

Service operation times and staff training

<p>About this guidance</p> <p>Service operation times and staff training</p> <p>Informing correspondents of contact details</p> <p>Out of hours messages</p> <p>Handling an initial call</p> <p>General call handling and protection of information</p> <p>Handling different types of call</p> <p>Dealing with abusive and persistent calls</p> <p>Follow up actions after finishing a call</p> <p>Dealing with complaints</p>	<p>This page tells you when the criminal casework duty officer lines are in operation, how calls to these numbers are handled, and how staff train to manage this service.</p> <p>The duty officer lines are open from 9am to 5pm, Monday to Friday.</p> <p>The local team manager appoints a suitably-trained administrative officer in the administration team to answer initial calls. These are then passed to the relevant case owner if necessary.</p> <p>All Home Office staff who handle phone calls can access the e-learning course: Handle calls with confidence and professionalism.</p> <p>Staff in criminal casework who are in regular contact with foreign national offenders (FNOs) and their representatives need to complete the e-learning course: Turn difficult callers into delighted customers.</p> <p>To access the e-learning courses, see related link: 1. Using Discover.</p>	<p>Related links</p> <p>Links to staff intranet removed</p>
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Handling telephone calls to duty officer numbers

Informing correspondents of contact details

<p>About this guidance</p> <p>Service operation times and staff training</p> <p>Informing correspondents of contact details</p> <p>Out of hours messages</p> <p>Handling an initial call</p> <p>General call handling and protection of information</p> <p>Handling different types of call</p> <p>Dealing with abusive and persistent calls</p> <p>Follow up actions after finishing a call</p> <p>Dealing with complaints</p>	<p>This page tells criminal casework staff how to tell potential correspondents how to contact the duty officer telephone service.</p> <p>The relevant duty officer numbers and office hours must be included on all documents and correspondence sent to foreign national offenders (FNOs), whose case is being managed by criminal casework, and their representatives. The number for the dedicated hotline for the facilitated return scheme (FRS) must also be included. For further information on FRS, see related link.</p> <p>Local managers must put in place processes to tell FNOs the relevant duty officer number when their case is first allocated to a case owning team, using the FNO allocation cover letter. There are four versions of this document available on the CID document generator, which must be used in different circumstances as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• ICD.4488 – Letter on allocation: Custody – Reps only (to be issued to a representative of a FNO still serving a custodial sentence)• ICD.4489 – Letter on allocation: Custody – Prison (to be issued to the FNO still serving a custodial sentence by the prison)• ICD.4492 – Letter on allocation: Released or Reps (to be issued either to a representative of a FNO now released or directly to a FNO now released)• ICD.4599 – Letter on allocation: IS detained – immigration removal centre (IRC) or prison (to be issued to the FNO being detained for immigration purposes through either the IRC or prison). <p>The appropriate version of this letter must also be sent when a Home Office file is permanently transferred to a caseworking team with a different duty officer telephone number.</p> <p>Once the case is allocated, the prison must be told of the details by fax, using the FNO allocation fax cover ICD.4491 available on the CID document generator.</p>	<p>Related links</p> <p>Links to staff intranet removed</p>
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If the case is allocated to a criminal casework case owner during a FNO's prison induction interview, they must be given the duty officer contact details. This must be done by the prison operations and removal team (PORT), using the FNO induction cover letter ICD.4490 available on the CID document generator.

For more details on how criminal casework allocates FNO cases to case owners, see related link: [Workflow](#).

A list of duty officer numbers is available on Horizon, see related link: [Criminal casework contact details](#).

Direct telephone numbers of individual Home Office officials must not be given to members of the public without the consent of the official concerned.

If it is necessary to give a contact number, the relevant duty officer number must be given.

Depending on your work, and in line with local line management instructions, you can include your direct line number on correspondence. For example, it may be useful to give your direct contact details in correspondence with Home Office or Prison Service staff only, that will not be seen either by the FNO or their representative.

Handling telephone calls to duty officer numbers

Out of hours messages

<p>About this guidance</p> <p>Service operation times and staff training</p> <p>Informing correspondents of contact details</p> <p>Out of hours messages</p> <p>Handling an initial call</p> <p>General call handling and protection of information</p> <p>Handling different types of call</p> <p>Dealing with abusive and persistent calls</p> <p>Follow up actions after finishing a call</p> <p>Dealing with complaints</p>	<p>This page tells you about the message staff in criminal casework must use when the office is closed to tell callers when to call back.</p> <p>Local managers of criminal casework caseworking teams must make sure a message is recorded for callers who contact the duty telephone number when the office is closed. The following message is recommended:</p> <p>‘Thank you for calling the Home Office Immigration Enforcement criminal casework [insert casework team name]. Our office is now closed. Please call back during office hours. Our normal operating hours are 9am to 5pm Monday to Friday, excluding public holidays.’</p> <p>Managers must also make sure the duty telephone line is diverted to the message at the end of each working day and the diversion is cancelled at the beginning of the next working day.</p> <p>In some teams, it may be appropriate to allow callers to leave a recorded message if they wish. If so, arrangements must be made for any messages to be accessed and cleared on the next working day, in order to prevent the number becoming blocked.</p> <p>For instructions on how to set up a messaging service, see related link: Telephone messaging service.</p>	<p>Related links</p> <p>Links to staff intranet removed</p>
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Handling telephone calls to duty officer numbers

Handling the initial call

<p>About this guidance</p> <p>Service operation times and staff training</p> <p>Informing correspondents of contact details</p> <p>Out of hours messages</p> <p>Handling an initial call</p> <p>General call handling and protection of information</p> <p>Handling different types of call</p> <p>Dealing with abusive and persistent calls</p> <p>Follow up actions after finishing a call</p> <p>Dealing with complaints</p>	<p>This page tells criminal casework staff how to handle an initial call to their team's duty officer telephone number.</p> <p>Any calls received on the external duty officer telephone line must be answered with the following line:</p> <p>'Home Office Immigration Enforcement [team member's name] speaking. Can I help you?'</p> <p>In some teams it may be appropriate for the person receiving the initial call to deal with the caller's enquiry, if they can. For example, in the facilitated returns scheme (FRS) team, the administrative officer covering the FRS hotline will deal with the enquiry in line with their agreed processes and not forward the call on to another team member. For details on how the FRS team manage calls, see related link: FRS team call etiquette.</p> <p>If the person answering the call is not the owner of the case being queried they must:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• check the caller has come through to the appropriate team• if not, pass the call on promptly to the appropriate caseworker• record the call on the team's log, see related link: Duty phone call log. <p>The initial call handler must ask the questions needed to fill in the log sheet and establish the correct case owner to avoid blocking the duty officer line for any longer than necessary. A suggested script at this point is:</p> <p>'I need to ask you a few short questions to help make sure I can pass you on to the right person as quickly as possible.'</p> <p>If the caller cannot provide a Home Office reference number, they must be asked their name, date of birth and nationality, which can be used to find the case reference number on CID.</p>	<p>Related links</p> <p>Links to staff intranet removed</p>
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	<p>If the case owner is absent, the call must be passed to the team leader.</p> <p>If the caller's case is put through to the wrong team it must be redirected to the appropriate team who currently owns the case. The duty officer numbers for criminal casework caseworking teams are available at related link: Criminal casework contact details.</p> <p>The task of identifying the credentials of the caller and any follow-up action is the responsibility of the case owner or member of the team who is dealing with the caller's enquiry.</p> <p>Sometimes local managers have a rota of people to deal with cases belonging to absent colleagues. These details must be sent to the person designated to answer the duty officer phone.</p>	
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Handling telephone calls to duty officer numbers

General call handling and protection of information

<p>About this guidance</p> <p>Service operation times and staff training</p> <p>Informing correspondents of contact details</p> <p>Out of hours messages</p> <p>Handling an initial call</p> <p>General call handling and protection of information</p> <p>Handling different types of call</p> <p>Dealing with abusive and persistent calls</p> <p>Follow up actions after finishing a call</p> <p>Dealing with complaints</p>	<p>This page tells you how calls to the criminal casework duty officer telephone service are handled in general, and the approach to data protection.</p> <p>The caseworker answering calls to their team's duty officer line must be polite at all times and very clear. Calls must be used as an opportunity to help compliance with the deportation process, wherever possible. If there is any uncertainty about the credentials of the caller or what they want, they must be put through to a local manager, or asked to put their request in writing. All calls must be recorded on CID.</p> <p>The Home Office handles a lot of data about individuals. Every individual in the organisation is responsible for making sure personal data is protected, in accordance with the current rules and procedures. All criminal casework staff must complete the information management e-learning course.</p> <p>The first step when handling any call is to establish who is calling. Information from records about an individual case must not be disclosed to a caller, unless their identity and entitlement to receive the information is established.</p> <p>For more information about disclosure and the Data Protection Act 1998 see related link: Data protection and data sharing (UKVI and immigration enforcement).</p>	<p>Related links</p> <p>See also</p> <p>Links to staff intranet removed</p>
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Handling telephone calls to duty officer numbers

Handling different types of calls

<p>About this guidance</p> <p>Service operation times and staff training</p> <p>Informing correspondents of contact details</p> <p>Out of hours messages</p> <p>Handling an initial call</p> <p>General call handling and protection of information</p> <p>Handling different types of call</p> <p>Dealing with abusive and persistent calls</p> <p>Follow up actions after finishing a call</p> <p>Dealing with complaints</p>	<p>This section tells you about the various types of call criminal casework staff can receive through their team duty officer telephone lines.</p> <p>The following callers are covered:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• foreign national offenders (FNOs)• FNOs' representatives• family members and other third parties associated with a FNO, and• press or media. <p>There is also guidance on what to do if a caseworking team receives a call about a case which it is not responsible for.</p> <p>See related links for more information on each of these categories.</p>	<p>In this section</p> <p>Calls from foreign national offenders</p> <p>Calls from representatives of foreign national offenders</p> <p>Calls from family members of FNOs and other third parties</p> <p>Calls from press and media about FNOs</p>
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Handling telephone calls to duty officer numbers

Calls from foreign national offenders

<p>About this guidance</p> <p>Service operation times and staff training</p> <p>Informing correspondents of contact details</p> <p>Out of hours messages</p> <p>Handling an initial call</p> <p>General call handling and protection of information</p> <p>Handling different types of call</p> <p>Dealing with abusive and persistent calls</p> <p>Follow up actions after finishing a call</p> <p>Dealing with complaints</p>	<p>This page tells criminal casework staff how to handle calls from foreign national offenders (FNOs) received through their team duty officer telephone lines.</p> <p>When you answer a call, you must ask for the FNO's:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• full name• nationality• date of birth• current place of custody (prison) or detention (immigration removal centre), or if not in custody or detention, current postal address including postcode• most recent contact with the Home Office and the nature of that contact, and• any other relevant questions. <p>This information must be checked against records held on CID. You may have established a relationship with the FNO or you may be able to ask further questions based on their case records which will help verify the identity of the caller. CID provides further information that is unlikely to be known in any depth by a third party (for example custodial and detention history).</p> <p>If there is any doubt about the caller's identity, they must be asked to put their request in writing. The case owner must prepare a written response to any requests for an update on that case, and fax this to the prison or immigration removal centre, or send to the address already held in Home Office records if the FNO is now living in the community.</p> <p>It can be a frustrating experience for FNOs to not know what stage their immigration case has reached, or not having any responses to their letters to the Home Office. By showing some understanding of the reasons for their frustration, you can help to diffuse any tension during a call. You can do this by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• being patient	<p>In this section</p> <p>Calls from representatives of foreign national offenders</p> <p>Calls from family members of FNOs and other third parties</p> <p>Calls from press and media about FNOs</p>
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| | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• listening to the person and letting them talk• considering what you can do for the caller• explaining what is causing delays, for example:<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ an inability to verify their identity○ a late claim for asylum○ responses from their embassy, and○ if possible, give timescales for actions by criminal casework• explaining what can be done to reduce delays, for example contacting their embassy directly or producing necessary documentation• explaining why they are being detained, and explain the bail process• explaining what they need to give criminal casework to help with obtaining a travel document• giving information about the facilitated returns scheme (FRS), the FRS team hotline is 020 8760 8513. | |
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Handling telephone calls to duty officer numbers

Calls from representatives of foreign national offenders

<p>About this guidance</p> <p>Service operation times and staff training</p> <p>Informing correspondents of contact details</p> <p>Out of hours messages</p> <p>Handling an initial call</p> <p>General call handling and protection of information</p> <p>Handling different types of call</p> <p>Dealing with abusive and persistent calls</p> <p>Follow up actions after finishing a call</p> <p>Dealing with complaints</p>	<p>This page tells criminal casework staff how to handle calls from representatives of foreign national offenders (FNOs) received through their team duty officer telephone lines.</p> <p>If someone calls who is listed on CID as the FNO's elected legal representative, they are able to make the same request as the FNO would in person.</p> <p>The duty officer must ask for the representative's reference number they use in correspondence with the Home Office, and check with the correspondence held on the FNO's file or on CID. If there is any doubt about the credentials of the representative, they must be called back using the telephone number listed on CID or on official correspondence on file.</p> <p>The representative's details on CID are accessed through the 'sponsoring organisations' icon which appears on the left-hand side of the 'case details' screen.</p> <p>If the representative's query cannot be answered immediately, the duty officer must tell them they will be called back or an answer will be faxed to them, and give clear timescales for doing this. If the query is complex or there is uncertainty as to how to proceed, they must be asked to put their request in writing, as further advice may be needed from a manager or senior caseworker.</p> <p>Once removal directions (RDs) are set for a FNO, representatives will probably call the duty officer number more frequently. Sometimes it is not possible to give an update immediately if the case was passed to another team to progress (usually that will be the operational support and certification unit (OSCU), if RDs have been set and are due to take place within 72 hours).</p> <p>Contact numbers for OSCU must never be given out. If necessary, the criminal casework caseworker must tell the caller they will investigate the matter and call them back. Teams must plan ahead for this eventuality, especially if several removals are due to take place over a short period.</p>	<p>In this section</p> <p>Calls from foreign national offenders</p> <p>Calls from family members of FNOs and other third parties</p> <p>Calls from press and media about FNOs</p>
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Handling telephone calls to duty officer numbers

Calls from family members of FNOs and other third parties

<p>About this guidance</p> <p>Service operation times and staff training</p> <p>Informing correspondents of contact details</p> <p>Out of hours messages</p> <p>Handling an initial call</p> <p>General call handling and protection of information</p> <p>Handling different types of call</p> <p>Dealing with abusive and persistent calls</p> <p>Follow up actions after finishing a call</p> <p>Dealing with complaints</p>	<p>This page tells criminal casework staff how to handle calls received from family members and other third party associates of foreign national offenders (FNOs) through their team duty officer telephone lines.</p> <p>Information must not be disclosed to relatives and other third parties claiming to be connected to a FNO, unless there is written authority from the FNO to do so.</p> <p>Sometimes criminal casework must write to other members of a FNO's family to request information. In addition, some process instructions and letters relating to a FNO's family may seek specific information for their children and/or carers. Calls seeking to provide this information, or to clarify certain issues, can therefore be expected.</p> <p>In these circumstances, the owner of the FNO's case can talk to the caller about the information required, to help make an informed decision.</p> <p>However, they must first check the identity of the caller by asking questions from the information held on Home Office records about the person who has been written to, and the correspondence sent. If there is any doubt at all about the caller's identity, or they are asking for information they are not entitled to receive, they must be asked to put their query in writing and a manager or senior caseworker must be consulted.</p> <p>For further information on disclosure of information to family members and victims, see related link: 04.0 - Disclosure of personal information to third parties.</p> <p>There is also an internal Home Office e-learning course on this topic for you to complete, available through related link: 1. Using Discover.</p>	<p>In this section</p> <p>Calls from foreign national offenders</p> <p>Calls from representatives of foreign national offenders</p> <p>Calls from press and media about FNOs</p> <p>Related links</p> <p>See also</p> <p>Links to staff intranet removed</p>
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Handling telephone calls to duty officer numbers

Calls from press and media about FNOs

<p>About this guidance</p> <p>Service operation times and staff training</p> <p>Informing correspondents of contact details</p> <p>Out of hours messages</p> <p>Handling an initial call</p> <p>General call handling and protection of information</p> <p>Handling different types of call</p> <p>Dealing with abusive and persistent calls</p> <p>Follow up actions after finishing a call</p> <p>Dealing with complaints</p>	<p>This page tells criminal casework staff how to handle calls from press or media organisations about foreign national offenders (FNOs) received through their team duty officer telephone lines.</p> <p>If you receive calls from the local or national media regarding a particular issue or case, no information must be given out by the team. The caller must be referred to the Home Office news desk in the press office, on 020 7035 3535.</p>	<p>In this section</p> <p>Calls from foreign national offenders</p> <p>Calls from representatives of foreign national offenders</p> <p>Calls from family members of FNOs and other third parties</p>
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Handling telephone calls to duty officer numbers

Dealing with abusive or persistent callers

<p>About this guidance</p> <p>Service operation times and staff training</p> <p>Informing correspondents of contact details</p> <p>Out of hours messages</p> <p>Handling an initial call</p> <p>General call handling and protection of information</p> <p>Handling different types of call</p> <p>Dealing with abusive and persistent calls</p> <p>Follow up actions after finishing a call</p> <p>Dealing with complaints</p>	<p>This section tells criminal casework staff how to deal with abusive or persistent calls to their team's duty officer telephone line.</p> <p>The following issues are covered:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• how to avoid abusive or persistent calls, where possible, and• where an abusive or persistent call is taken, how to tackle it. <p>For more information, see related links.</p>	<p>In this section</p> <p>How to avoid abusive calls</p> <p>How to handle abusive calls</p>
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Handling telephone calls to duty officer numbers

How to avoid abusive calls

<p>About this guidance</p> <p>Service operation times and staff training</p> <p>Informing correspondents of contact details</p> <p>Out of hours messages</p> <p>Handling an initial call</p> <p>General call handling and protection of information</p> <p>Handling different types of call</p> <p>Dealing with abusive and persistent calls</p> <p>Follow up actions after finishing a call</p> <p>Dealing with complaints</p>	<p>This page tells criminal casework staff how to avoid abusive or persistent calls to their team's duty officer telephone line.</p> <p>Staff in criminal casework teams can help prevent difficult situations developing during calls to the duty officer line by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• staying calm• listening to the caller and making them aware you are actively listening• asking questions to gain more information or clarify issues• not engaging in arguments• not taking any criticism personally, and• passing the call onto a manager if it is felt the situation is becoming too difficult. <p>In many cases, using these techniques during a call will make sure the conversation remains civil and professional, even where there may be difficulty in conveying information, or disagreement as to what action will be taken.</p>	<p>In this section</p> <p>How to handle abusive calls</p>
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Handling telephone calls to duty officer numbers

How to handle abusive calls

<p>About this guidance</p> <p>Service operation times and staff training</p> <p>Informing correspondents of contact details</p> <p>Out of hours messages</p> <p>Handling an initial call</p> <p>General call handling and protection of information</p> <p>Handling different types of call</p> <p>Dealing with abusive and persistent calls</p> <p>Follow up actions after finishing a call</p> <p>Dealing with complaints</p>	<p>This page tells criminal casework staff how to handle an abusive or persistent call to their team's duty officer telephone line.</p> <p>The Home Office's customer charter says staff will not tolerate the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• abusive, intimidating or threatening behaviour• swearing and offensive language• insulting remarks about a person's sex, race, nationality, disability status, age, actual or perceived religion or belief, or actual or perceived sexual orientation• shouting• insults about our procedures, staff or other people• attempts to use pressure or bribery to get information or progress. <p>Criminal casework is arranging for this statement to be included with the information it provides to foreign national offenders (FNOs) about their contact with the Home Office. However, callers will occasionally resort to some of the above language and behaviour even when the call is handled as correctly, professionally, and helpfully as possible.</p> <p>If unacceptable language or behaviour is used by a caller, they must be warned that if they continue to speak or act in that way, the call will be terminated. If the caller continues to be abusive or offensive, you must tell them that any further representations must be made in writing, before putting the telephone receiver down.</p> <p>For a flowchart setting out the process to be followed for terminating an abusive call, with a suggested script to follow, see related link: Call termination process and script.</p> <p>Following the termination of the call, the duty officer must:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• complete an abusive call record sheet (see related link: Abusive call log)• send the completed form to the local assistant director	<p>In this section</p> <p>How to avoid abusive calls</p> <p>Related links</p> <p>See also</p> <p>Links to staff intranet removed</p>
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- place a copy of the record sheet on the person's Home Office file, and
- make a note on CID.

Records of abusive calls are collated and forwarded to the health and safety department. Abusive calls will not be tolerated and must be followed up, where relevant, with prisons and immigration removal centres.

If a caller threatens a member of staff or a minister with violence or other physical retribution, details of the call must be recorded as described above, and the incident reported immediately to the departmental security unit's (DSU) security compliance section. DSU can be contacted using the telephone numbers below:

Restricted – do not disclose – start of section

The information in this page has been removed as it is restricted for internal Home Office use only.

Restricted – do not disclose – end of section

Threats to a detainee or offender must be referred to the relevant establishment. Threats to children must be reported to the child welfare services. For more information, see related link: [Safeguard and promote child welfare](#).

Depending on the nature of the threat, it may be appropriate to report it to the police. If there is any doubt, the duty officer must discuss this firstly with their manager, and then with DSU who will provide advice.

Handling telephone calls to duty officer numbers

Follow-up actions after finishing a call

<p>About this guidance</p> <p>Service operation times and staff training</p> <p>Informing correspondents of contact details</p> <p>Out of hours messages</p> <p>Handling an initial call</p> <p>General call handling and protection of information</p> <p>Handling different types of call</p> <p>Dealing with abusive and persistent calls</p> <p>Follow up actions after finishing a call</p> <p>Dealing with complaints</p>	<p>This page tells criminal casework staff what action they must take after finishing a call to their team's duty officer telephone line.</p> <p>All calls must be recorded on the relevant person's Home Office file and CID record. This action must be completed by the person who handled the major issues of the call. For example, if a call is answered by one team member and then passed on to another to deal with, it would be the latter person who must update the relevant records, once the call is completed.</p> <p>The file minute and CID note must make clear whether any follow-up action is needed and, if so, what that action is. Where appropriate, a diary event must be set on CID. Although not applicable in all circumstances, it is best to clarify in writing to the caller what was discussed and agreed to avoid any later misunderstandings.</p> <p>It is important that if a member of criminal casework staff indicates during a call that follow-up action will take place, including if they say they will call back or put their response in writing, these actions are carried out within the timescales suggested.</p> <p>If an unforeseen delay occurs, and you cannot complete the actions within the period suggested to the caller, they must be told of this. This will help to prevent frustration on the part of the caller and unnecessary further calls asking for updates on progress.</p>	
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Handling telephone calls to duty officer numbers

Dealing with complaints

<p>About this guidance</p> <p>Service operation times and staff training</p> <p>Informing correspondents of contact details</p> <p>Out of hours messages</p> <p>Handling an initial call</p> <p>General call handling and protection of information</p> <p>Handling different types of call</p> <p>Dealing with abusive and persistent calls</p> <p>Follow up actions after finishing a call</p> <p>Dealing with complaints</p>	<p>This page tells criminal casework staff how to manage complaints made to them about their service.</p> <p>The Home Office is committed to providing a high quality service to both internal and external customers.</p> <p>Inevitably however, things do sometimes go wrong. When this happens the Home Office is committed to take any complaints made seriously. Every complaint is investigated thoroughly by a specially trained officer at the appropriate level of authority.</p> <p>The Home Office deals with two types of complaints, formal and operational:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• formal complaints are those made by outside organisations about the behaviour of members of staff• operational complaints refer to the way in which a person's immigration case is dealt with. <p>You must be sensitive when handling customers and corporate partners, internal and external, and make sure all relevant work procedures are followed properly. Awareness of, and reference to, the right caseworking and operational instructions is vital for all staff managing and progressing work in these areas. You must take advice from the right sources if needed.</p> <p>If the caller makes a verbal complaint during the course of a telephone call, you must follow the procedure in the criminal casework complaints process. When dealing with telephone calls you must read the relevant instructions where they exist. There is also an internal Home Office e-learning course on this topic for you to complete (available through related link: 1. Using discover), alongside reference to the Home Office-wide guidance on complaints (see related link: Complaints guidance).</p> <p>If the complainant wishes to put their complaint in writing, you must ask them to send it to</p>	<p>Related links</p> <p>See also</p> <p>Links to staff intranet removed</p>
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the following address:

Nominated responsible officer
Complaints allocation hub
Customer service unit
UK Visas & Immigration
11th floor (long corridor), Lunar House
40 Wellesley Road
Croydon
CR9 2BY

Email: complaints@homeoffice.gsi.gov.uk

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Contact

<p>About this guidance</p> <p>Service operation times and staff training</p> <p>Informing correspondents of contact details</p> <p>Out of hours messages</p> <p>Handling an initial call</p> <p>General call handling and protection of information</p> <p>Handling different types of call</p> <p>Dealing with abusive and persistent calls</p> <p>Follow up actions after finishing a call</p> <p>Dealing with complaints</p>	<p>This page explains who to contact for more help with a specific issue relating to ‘Handling telephone calls to criminal casework duty officer numbers’ guidance.</p> <p>If you have read this guidance and still need more help with this category, you must first ask your senior caseworker or line manager.</p> <p>If the question cannot be answered at that level, they or you may email criminal casework operational process and policy (CCOPP), using related link: Email CCD process team).</p> <p>Changes to this guidance can only be made by the modernised guidance team (MGT). If you think the policy content needs amending you must contact CCOPP, who will ask the MGT to update the guidance, if appropriate.</p> <p>The MGT will accept direct feedback on broken links, missing information or the format, style and navigability of this guidance. You can send these using the link: Email: Modernised guidance team.</p>	<p>Related links</p> <p>See also</p> <p>Changes to this guidance</p> <p>Information owner</p> <p>Links to staff intranet removed</p>
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Handling telephone calls to duty officer numbers

Information owner

[About this guidance](#)

[Service operation times and staff training](#)

[Informing correspondents of contact details](#)

[Out of hours messages](#)

[Handling an initial call](#)

[General call handling and protection of information](#)

[Handling different types of call](#)

[Dealing with abusive and persistent calls](#)

[Follow up actions after finishing a call](#)

[Dealing with complaints](#)

This page tells you about this version of the 'Handling telephone calls to duty officer numbers' guidance and who owns it.

Version	5.0
Valid from date	9 December 2013
Policy owner	Official – sensitive: information removed
Cleared by director	Official – sensitive: information removed
Director's role	Official – sensitive: information removed
Clearance date	2 November 2011
This version approved for publication by	Official – sensitive: information removed
Approver's role	Official – sensitive: information removed
Approval date	5 December 2013

Changes to this guidance can only be made by the modernised guidance team (MGT). If you think the policy content needs amending you must contact CCOPP, using related link: Email CCD process team, who will ask the MGT to update the guidance, if appropriate.

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Related links

See also

[Changes to this guidance](#)

[Contact](#)

Links to staff intranet removed