



When you are not happy with the way your complaint about a judge was dealt with



Easy read version of:
JACO Conduct Leaflet 2015.
December 2018

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What is this about?



The **Ombudsman's** name is Paul Kernaghan. He can look into how complaints about judges were dealt with.



He is not part of the government and he does not work with judges.

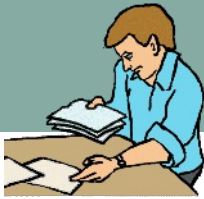


This leaflet tells you what he can and cannot do. It tells you what happens with what you tell him.

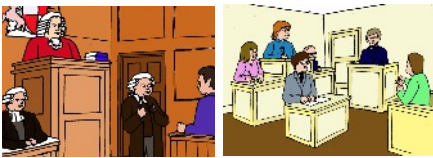


Please read it carefully. Then think about whether he is the best person to help you.

What we do



You may want to complain about how a judge has behaved. It may be that you think they were rude to you.



Then you complain to 1 of 3 places, depending on what sort of court you were in:



- the Judicial Conduct Investigations Office(JCIO) – if it is about a judge or a coroner



- a Tribunal President – if it is about a Tribunal judge or member



- a Magistrates' Advisory Committee - if it is about a magistrate.



You may feel that they did not deal with your complaint fairly. Then we may be able to help you.



Please read this leaflet carefully. You can contact us if you are not sure what to do or need extra help. You can phone us or email us. The details are at the end of this leaflet.



The important things for us in our work are:

- we do not work for the government or with judges



we try to do the best job possible when we look at complaints. We deal with complaints fairly and as quickly as possible



- we treat you and the person you complain about in the same way



- we will be polite to you and help you explain your complaint to us. If we cannot help you we will tell you why



- we value people being different and their ways of living



- we listen to what you tell us. We try to make sure we work with you in the way that is best for you



- we want everyone to be able to use us easily.

What do we deal with?



We can only look at how a complaint about a judge was dealt with by:



- the Judicial Conduct Investigations Office (JCIO)



- a Tribunal President



- a Magistrates' Advisory Committee.

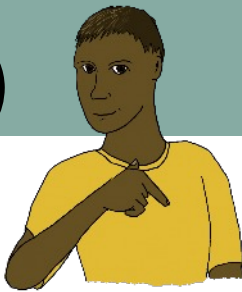


You cannot come to us until you have complained to one of these.



They need to have finished dealing with your complaint before you come to us.

Unless they are taking too long to deal with your complaint.

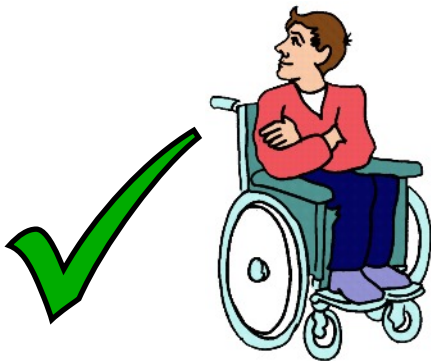


Can we help you?

We **can** help you when:



- you have already complained to the Judicial Conduct Investigations Office (JCIO)
a Tribunal President or
a Magistrates' Advisory Committee

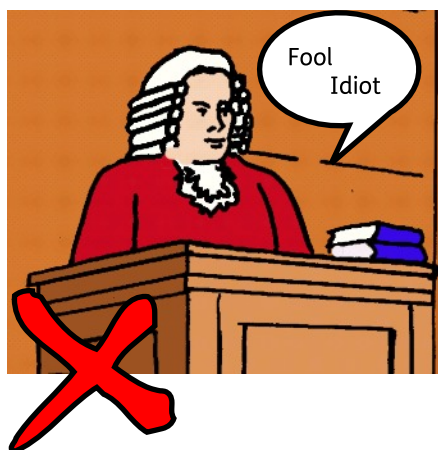


- you are not happy with the way they dealt with your complaint



- you tell us less than 28 days after their final letter about your complaint.

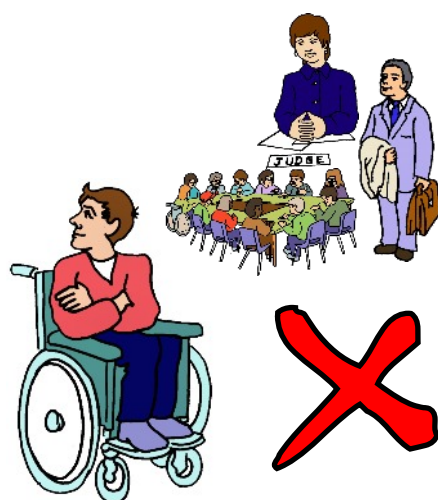
We **cannot** help you when:



- it is about the way a judge has behaved. You must complain first to the Judicial Conduct Investigations Office (JCIO)
a Tribunal President or
a Magistrates' Advisory Committee



- it is about the decision a judge has made. You might want to talk to your solicitor, Citizen's Advice Bureau or law centre about this



- you are not happy with what was decided by
the Judicial Conduct Investigations
Office (JCIO),
a Tribunal President or
a Magistrates' Advisory Committee.
We can only look at the way they
decided it.

What do we do to help you?



Decide if we are the right people to help you.



We will write to you if we are not the right people. We will tell you why we are not the right people.



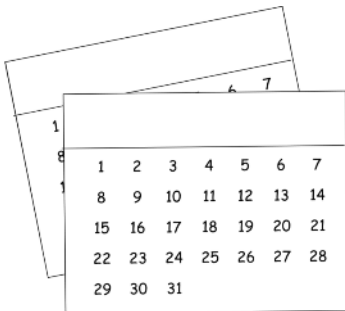
We will ask for your complaint file from the place you complained to. We ask you to agree to let us see this file on the form you fill in we will also show them your complaint. We can only look at your complaint when you agree.



We will quickly do a good job of checking everything. If you say that the way your complaint was looked at was wrong the **Ombudsman** will decide if he agrees with you.



The **Ombudsman** will decide if he agrees with you. He may think that your complaint about the judge was dealt with properly. Then he will write a report for you. This will tell you why he does not agree with you.



When we think you may have a point we will look at everything carefully. This can take many months. We will tell you what we are doing



We will give the **Ombudsman** a report on what we find out. He will decide if the complaint about the judge was dealt with properly. He has to send this report to the Lord Chief Justice and Lord Chancellor. They will say what they think.



He will look at what the Lord Chancellor and the Lord Chief Justice say. He will think about what they say and may change some of his report. Then he will send you his report.



What will the Ombudsman do?



When he agrees that your complaint about the judge was not dealt with properly he can:



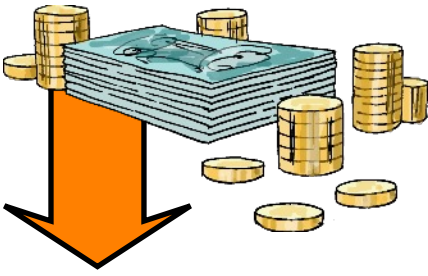
- say that your complaint should be looked at again



- ask the people who did not look at your complaint properly to apologise to you



- say that there should be changes to the way complaints are looked at. This will help to make sure it does not happen again

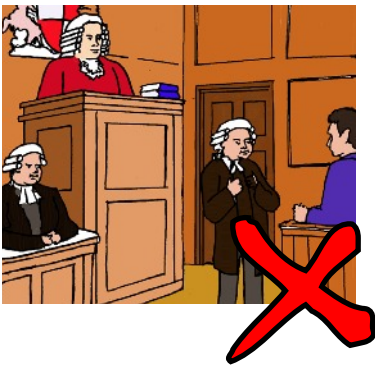


- you may have lost money because of the way your complaint was looked at. He can say whether you should be given money to make this up.



He cannot:

- tell anyone off



- start your court case again



- sack anyone



insist that you are paid money.



Questions we have been asked



What sort of things can you look at?

We can only look at how a complaint about a judge was dealt with by:



- the Judicial Conduct Investigations Office (JCIO)



- a Tribunal President



- a Magistrates' Advisory Committee.



If something has gone wrong we will tell you why.



I complained about a judge but they took a long time to look at my complaint. Can you deal with this?



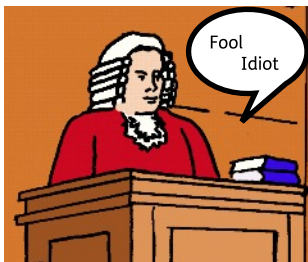
Yes.



They did not look at my complaint. They said it was about how a judge came to his decision and not about his behaviour. Can you deal with this?



Yes we can look at whether or not they looked at your complaint in the right way.



Can you look at my complaint about the way a judge behaved?



No. This is the job of the Judicial Conduct Investigations Office (JCIO), a Tribunal President or a Magistrates' Advisory Committee. We can only look at how they dealt with your complaint.



Can you look at the decision the judge made in court?



No.



I have not had a decision yet from the Judicial Conduct Investigations Office (JCIO), the Tribunal President or the Magistrates' Advisory Committee. Can I complain?



No. They must usually make their decision before you complain. But if you have waited a long time for their decision you can complain about delay



When I get their decision how long do I have to complain?



After you get their decision you must complain in 28 days or less. The **Ombudsman** can sometimes look at it after this. But you have to tell him why it has taken you so long to tell him you are not happy.

Are there things you cannot deal with?



Yes:

- court staff (contact the court)



- a barrister (go to the bar council)



- a solicitor (go to the Solicitor's Regulatory Authority)



- the police
(www.ipcc.gov.uk/complaints there is a link to easy read)



- when you think someone has done something against the law. Such as taking a **bribe** (please go to your local police.)

Contact us



If you still have some questions please contact us at:

**Judicial Appointments and Conduct
Ombudsman
1st Floor, The Tower
102 Petty France
London
SW1H 9AJ**



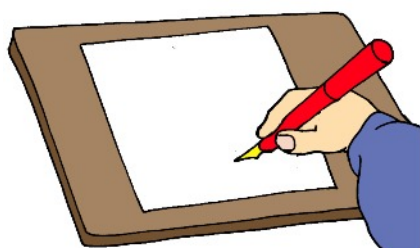
Phone us

020 3334 2900



Email us

headoffice@judicialombudsman.gov.uk



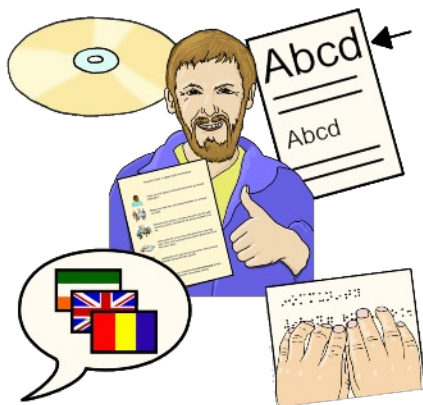
To complain please fill in the form with this booklet.

Please just tell us the main things you are not happy with. You can send extra papers if there is not enough room on the form.



You can complain on the internet. Go to www.gov.uk/government/organisations/judicial-appointments-and-conduct-ombudsman

For people:



- who are disabled
- English is not your main language
- who need advice to fill out the form.

Please contact us to find out how we can help you.

Hard words

bribe - giving someone money to do something against the law

Lord Chancellor - head of the Ministry of Justice

Lord Chief Justice - head judge

Ombudsman – someone who looks at complaints



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