



**Judicial Appointments & Conduct
Ombudsman**

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PRIVATE AND CONFIDENTIAL

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26 September 2022

Our Ref: Fol/22

Dear R M Crorie

RE: FREEDOM OF INFORMATION REQUEST

Thank you for your request for information dated 27 August 2022, which has been considered under the Freedom of Information (FOI) Act 2000.

Your request stated:

"The Pensions Ombudsman Service has recently confirmed that it will not accept complaints that are referred to it by other Ombudsman services, instead requiring complainants to complete its own complaints form on the basis that the referred complaint is "not valid". It has failed to explain what it means by "not valid", but this refusal is apparently based on its belief that it will otherwise be in breach of data protection legislation.

Clearly, this policy leads directly to additional unnecessary form-filling on the part of the complainant and displays an unacceptable and unhelpful attitude towards the general public as the primary users of its services.

My query to you is "Do you accept complaints referred to you by other Ombudsman services or do you, like the Pensions Ombudsman Service, refuse such referrals and require complainants to complete your own complaints forms even when the referred complaint contains all necessary information for the complaint to be investigated?"

Our response

The Judicial Appointments and Conduct Ombudsman's office has no record of receiving any complaints in the terms as set out in your enquiry; we do not have referral processes in place with other Ombudsman services. Complaints received in the circumstances described would be considered on a case by case basis. This office does provide complaint forms for complainant's to detail their concerns, however the use of such is not compulsory, and complaints received in another format (i.e. email) will be considered and

processed if they included the necessary detail required to enable the complaint to proceed.

I hope that the information is useful to you. If you are dissatisfied with this response, you can request an internal review which would be considered by Beatrice Keyte, Joint Head of Office. You can send your request for internal review to:

headoffice@judicialombudsman.gov.uk

If you are dissatisfied with internal review response, you can complain to the Information Commissioner's office (ICO) They can be contacted at:

Wycliffe House
Water Lane
Wilmslow
Cheshire
SK9 5AF.
Email: casework@ico.org.uk
Telephone: 0303 123 1113.

Yours sincerely

Joan Wilson
Joint Head of Officer/Business Manager