

A GUIDE FOR OFFENDERS

PLEASE BE PATIENT WITH US

We try to do our work as quickly as possible but some complaints require significant time to research facts, policy and the law.

A FINAL THOUGHT

The role of the Citizens' Representative Office is to ensure complaints are addressed in an unbiased and objective manner. This is done by ensuring that both the complainant and the government body are given the opportunity to provide the Office with information and feedback concerning the complaint.

HOW TO CONTACT US

Office of the Citizens' Representative
4th Floor, Beothuck Building
20 Crosbie Place
P.O. Box 8400
St. John's, NL A1B 3N7

Phone: (709) 729-7647
Toll Free : 1-800-559-0079
Fax: (709) 729-7696

Email: citrep@gov.nl.ca
Website: www.citizensrep.nl.ca

**Mail sent to our Office is
to be forwarded unopened
under law.**



THE OFFICE OF THE CITIZENS' REPRESENTATIVE

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WHEN TO CONTACT THE CITIZENS' REPRESENTATIVE

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Offenders in provincial correctional institutions are subject to the United Nations Basic Principles for the Treatment of Prisoners (U.N. 1990). These principles include respect for human dignity, freedom from discrimination and access to education, cultural activities and health services.

Our Office can look into complaints and answer questions about a provincial government department, agency, board or commission, including the Department of Justice Adult Corrections Division.

If you have an emergency, report it to a correctional officer within the institution. (**An emergency is a situation immediately affecting your health or safety**).

WHAT TO DO BEFORE YOU CONTACT US ABOUT NON-EMERGENCIES

1. The Department of Justice has an inmate grievance process. Consult with staff with regard to filing a grievance.
2. If you are dissatisfied with the final outcome of the grievance process, we may be able to help. Contact us at (709) 729-7647 or 1-800-559-0079 and ask to speak with an Investigator.

WHEN NOT TO CONTACT US

If you contact us about a non-emergency before trying the steps explained in this brochure, we

probably will decline to look into your complaint until after you follow those steps.

Also, **please do not contact us** if:

- Your problem involves a judge. We have no authority over the courts.

A complaint against a Provincial Court Judge must be made in writing to the:

Judicial Council of NL
P.O. Box 937
St. John's, NL A1C 5M3

Complaints against Supreme Court Judges must be made in writing to:

Canadian Judicial Council
112 Kent Street, Suite 450
Ottawa, ON K1A 0W8

- Your problem involves a lawyer. We have no authority over attorneys. Contact the following society instead:

The Law Society of NL
PO Box 1028
St. John's, NL A1C 5M3

- You need help with the correctness of your criminal conviction. We cannot give legal advice. Instead, contact the following agency:

Legal Aid Commission
2 Steer's Cove
Cormack Building
Box 399, Stn. "C"
St. John's, NL A1C 5J9

WHAT WE DO

After receiving a complaint about a prison or jail, we review the relevant information and decide whether staff:

- Followed the law and institution policy.
- Acted reasonably and fairly.

If it is clear they did both of these, we won't pursue the complaint any further. But if this is not clear, we look into the complaint further. We review laws and policies. We talk to staff to get their side. We may also require additional information from you.

Based on the information, we conclude whether your complaint has merit. If we conclude a complaint lacks merit, we close the complaint and explain to you how we reached our conclusion. But, if we conclude your complaint is substantiated, we look for ways that staff can:

- Fix the problem.
- Reduce the chance it will happen again.

We talk with prison staff informally about these things. Most legitimate complaints are resolved this way.

Sometimes, we might think there is a problem but staff do not agree. In such cases, we usually continue to work with them about the matter.

As a last resort, the Citizens' Representative can recommend action. Please note this is not order power. Failure to act on recommendations, however, may be reported to the House of Assembly or to the public.