



Gangmasters &
Labour Abuse Authority

GLAA External Complaints Procedure

15 May 2024

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Responsible Officer	Director of Strategy and Impact		
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2.0	05/01/15	Review and update	
2.1	05/06/15	Addition of time limits	
2.2	05/06/15	Time limits text revised	
3	05/06/15	With time limit section	
3.1	21/09/16	Addition of Ombudsman section	
3.2	22/11/16	Exemption section at s8	
3.3	12/03/19	Para 4 – Amended review of complaints. Paras 12-16 – updated Complaints against GLAA Officers section 28-33 – Addition of Independent Office for Police Conduct (IOPC) section	
3.4	08/04/1	Revised to become 1.0 internal facing version	
3.5/3.7	06/06/19	Alignment to revisions re turnaround times in the external version	
3.8	24/06/19	Presented at EMT for approval	
4.0	11/07/19	Added deputy into para 13 following comments at July board	
4.1	21/06/21	Agreed out of committee and by SRO and noted in September EMT	
4.2	07/07/21	Version control updated. Ownership changed from Strategy team to Governance team. Para 21. updated to reflect the approved external complaints procedure.	
5.0	21/07/21	Changes made following consultation with Senior HR Officer	
5.1	01/06/22	Annual review and update	
5.2	10/06/22	Version control updated; IOPC and Ombudsman contact details updated.	
6.0	18/07/22	Final policy approved by GLAA Board.	

6.1	16/02/2024	Annual review and update. SRO updated and IOPC Complaints link updated on para 13. Version control tag updated.
6.2	27/03/2024	Changes made following consultation at Management Board: Para 7 - Subheading added Paras 8-9 – addition of alternative contact methods Para 10 – addition of British Sign Language (BSL) video relay service Para 16 – alternative contact method included – ‘or email’ added to letter response Paras 19-24 – addition of the withdrawal of a complaint procedure
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For completion if policy is archived		
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GLAA Complaints Procedure - External

1. The GLAA is committed to being open and responsive to complaints from the public. Complaints can be made in any format, but preferably in writing, sent to complaints@gla.gov.uk.
2. This complaints procedure does not cover:
 - appeals against licence decisions – see [Appeals process](#);
 - other policy decisions that we are empowered to make as part of our regulatory activities, such as setting licence fee levels;
 - complaints about how we have handled requests for information under the [Freedom of Information Act 2000 or Data Protection Act 2018, including the General Data Protection Regulations](#) (GDPR);
 - matters which are the responsibility of other bodies such as the Home Office;
 - complaints against licensed organisations (such information should be submitted as potential intelligence to intelligence@gla.gov.uk and we will deal with it accordingly as set out in our intelligence procedures);
 - our relationship with our employees and between employees;
 - contractual or commercial disputes involving us;
 - matters that have become the subject of legal proceedings or are under police investigation, or where sanctions have been imposed to which an alternative appeal mechanism applies;
 - dissatisfaction with a policy the GLAA has adopted, including the complaints policy;
 - an attempt to reopen a previously concluded complaint or to have a complaint reconsidered where the GLAA has already given a final decision.
3. The GLAA will aim to respond to complaints within the following target timescales:

	Informal/formal complaint – maximum period to reply from the date of receipt
Initial response (acknowledgement where further investigations are required)	5 working days
Full response	20 working days

4. If you wish to make a complaint you should make it normally within six months of the date of the incident(s) in question, or the conclusion of any legal process that has been undertaken by the GLAA.
5. Where more than six months have passed since the incident you have complained of you should include an explanation for the delay in making the complaint. We will then decide whether your complaint is considered to be 'out of time' or whether exceptionally it will be considered.
6. If you make a complaint that requires an investigation (for example into a complex matter involving officer conduct) it is possible that the enquiry may take longer than 20 working days to complete. In such circumstances you will be notified that the original deadline will not be met, and you will be provided with an indication of when a reply or further communication may be issued. Where this is required, it should be sent to you as soon as the situation is identified, and before 20 working days have elapsed.

How to make a complaint

7. If you contact the GLAA by telephone and make a complaint you will be asked if you wish to make a formal complaint. If so, you should be advised to put your complaint in writing, preferably by email to complaints@gla.gov.uk.
8. Or write to us at:

Governance Department
Gangmasters and Labour Abuse Authority
PO Box 10272
Nottingham
NG2 9PB
9. You can also telephone us on **0345 602 5020** (Monday to Friday, 9am to 5pm). From outside the UK: **+44 (0)345 602 5020**. Please note that should you wish to make a formal complaint, you may be asked to put this in writing. [Find out about call charges](#)
10. British Sign Language (BSL) [video relay service](#) if you're on a computer - find out how to [use the service on mobile or tablet](#)
11. If you do not wish to put your complaint in writing but want the complaint to be considered, you will be asked to supply details of the complaint to enable it to be fully examined. You will be asked to supply your contact details. If you do not provide this information, it may not be possible to properly consider the complaint. Nor will we be able to notify you of the outcome of the review of your complaint. Your complaint will be considered independently of the area or activity of the GLAA you are complaining about.

Complaints against GLAA Officers

12. If your complaint concerns the GLAA's use of investigation powers you can find more information on those powers, conduct of GLAA officers, and details of how to complain on our website in the Code of Practice¹ on the use of powers.
13. We treat all complaints seriously including those concerning our officers. We will need to advise the nature of the complaint to any Officer complained about. We may also need to interview you to obtain more details about the complaint in order to investigate it thoroughly.
14. If your complaint concerns the conduct, and use of our wider enforcement powers, you should address your complaint to the Independent Office for Police Conduct (IOPC). The IOPC has the authority to investigate such complaints.
15. If you complain to the IOPC they will decide whether the complaint requires investigation, or if it should be referred to the GLAA to investigate. In all circumstances you will be kept informed of the decision on how the complaint will be handled.
16. You can find out more about how to make a complaint to the IOPC at: [Complaints | Independent Office for Police Conduct \(IOPC\)](#)
17. Further detail on the legislation that provides the IOPC with oversight and investigation of complaints against authorised investigators when undertaking investigations using its powers is available on the UK legislation website².
18. You can contact the IOPC at:
Telephone: **0300 020 0096** (press **2** at prompt)
Email: enquiries@policeconduct.gov.uk
Website: www.policeconduct.gov.uk

The procedure to withdraw a complaint

19. The complainant, or someone acting on behalf of the complainant, should write to the GLAA providing signed notification that the complainant wishes to withdraw their complaint, or does not wish any further steps to be taken in respect of it, preferably in writing either by emailing complaints@gla.gov.uk or by post.
20. Where the complainant has indicated such a wish but has not provided signed confirmation in writing (either from them or someone acting on their behalf) the appropriate authority must write to the complainant to determine how they wish to proceed. If the complainant replies confirming they wish to withdraw their complaint or do not want any further steps to be taken in respect of it, or if they do not reply within 28 days (starting with the day after the day the appropriate authority sent the letter or email), the appropriate authority must continue as if it had received signed notification that the complainant wants to withdraw their complaint. The letter to the complainant must be sent in a way that can be audited – the IOPC encourages appropriate

¹ [Code of practice on compliance enforcement and investigations Jan 2019 \(gla.gov.uk\)](#)

² <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukxi/2017/520/contents/made>

authorities to use recorded delivery unless this is contrary to the complainant's preferred method of contact.

21. Where the complaint has not been referred (or has been referred and the IOPC has referred it back to the appropriate authority), the appropriate authority must make a decision about whether it is in the public interest for the complaint to be treated as a recordable conduct matter. Where a decision is taken (either by the IOPC or the appropriate authority) that the complaint will be treated as a recordable conduct matter, it must be handled as such.
22. Where the complaint is subject to an ongoing review, the appropriate authority must notify the relevant review body that it has recorded the withdrawal or the fact that the complainant does not wish any further steps to be taken. The appropriate authority must also inform the relevant review body of its decision about whether to treat the complaint as a recordable conduct matter, and of its reasons for this decision. Where the relevant review body is the IOPC, and the review is of the outcome of a complaint handled by investigation, the IOPC may instruct the appropriate authority to reverse a decision not to treat the complaint as a recordable conduct matter if it does not agree with it.
23. Unless the appropriate authority believes that to do so might prejudice any criminal investigation or pending proceedings, or would otherwise be contrary to the public interest, the appropriate authority must, as soon as practicable, inform the person complained against (if any) if:
 - it records the withdrawal of the complaint or the fact that the complainant does not wish any further steps to be taken.
 - a decision has been made that it is in the public interest to treat the complaint as a recordable conduct matter.
 - the IOPC has reversed the appropriate authority's decision (under regulation 38, Police (Complaints and Misconduct) Regulations 2020) not to treat the complaint as a recordable conduct matter and it will be treated as such.
24. Where a decision is taken that the complaint will not be treated as a recordable conduct matter, no further action needs to be taken in respect of the complaint. There will be no right to apply for a review of this decision.

At the conclusion of the complaint investigation

25. Once your complaint has been fully examined you will receive a response. The response will tell you whether we consider the complaint to be upheld. We will also tell you what action we have taken. If the complaint was about a particular GLAA Officer, they will be advised of the response we have issued to you. Our letter or email will also advise you what to do if you are not satisfied with the decision reached. If you are not satisfied with the outcome you may write to the GLAA's Chief Executive within 10 working days of the date on the letter or email, we send to you.

Complaints to the Parliamentary and Health Service Ombudsman (The Ombudsman)

26. If you remain dissatisfied after the GLAA's complaints procedure has been exhausted, you may wish to make a complaint to 'the Ombudsman'. The Ombudsman deals with complaints about maladministration by public bodies. Any complaint must be made via your Member of Parliament.
27. The Ombudsman seeks to establish whether a public body has acted correctly and fairly in carrying out its interpretation of the law. Cases for investigation may include those where a public authority:
 - is alleged to have done something in the wrong way
 - has done something they should not have done or
 - has failed to do something which they should have done.
28. The Ombudsman can recommend a variety of remedies, including the payment of compensation to complainants and the revision, adherence to, or clarification of administrative procedures. Further information is available from:

Tel: **0345 015 4033**

Website: <https://www.ombudsman.org.uk/>

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