

Advisers' training day: the Ombudsman & non-litigation remedies
Wednesday 25th October 2006 1.30pm – 5.30pm
The Resource Centre, 356 Holloway Road, London N7 6PA
(Nearest tube: Holloway Road)

This half-day practical training course aims to give solicitors and advisers the knowledge and tools to make effective use of the non-litigation remedies available within public law.

The focus is on common problems with the Benefit Authorities such as:

- What to do about delays and other failures within the administration of benefits by the DWP, Local Authorities and the Inland Revenue.
- What to do if you think there has been an unreasonable decision about the recovery of benefit overpayments.
- What to do about problems caused by the application of new policies and procedures.

The event is designed to enable delegates to choose a pair of workshops on the area most relevant to their work. In the first workshop, the focus is on the initial stage of the formal complaints process: the internal complaints service. Here, the complaints officers themselves will offer a comprehensive guide to how these processes are supposed to work, and advice on how to get the most out of them. The second workshop looks at what to do if this doesn't work. Insiders from the Parliamentary & Health Service Ombudsman, and the Local Government Ombudsman will give an indispensable practical guide to how to make a powerful complaint to them, and the remedies that they are able to provide for your clients.

1.30 – 1.50	<p>Introduction to the day</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Session 1 will offer an explanation of how the various internal complaints procedures are supposed to work in both in theory and in practice. - Session 2 looks at what to do and who to go to if this doesn't happen. - Choice of focus on Parliamentary & Health Service Ombudsman; and Local Government Ombudsman.
1.50 – 3.10	<p>Workshop I - First tier internal complaints system</p> <p>The first stop for your clients is the internal complaints service of the offending organisation. In this session, those in charge of the processes offer a comprehensive guide to how these systems are supposed to work, and advice on how to get the most out of them. The Government sets great store by these processes, so we ask:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What are the processes? • Why use them at all? • What are the time limits (on the client and on the authority)? • What should you do if the Authority ignores them? • What can you do to help make them work? <p>Choose from the following focuses:</p> <p>i) DWP Complaints Procedure Eddie Smith and Carol Farrell - DWP Corporate Customer</p>

	<p>ii) Affairs Dept Adjudicator's Office Simon Oakes – Head of Office, Adjudicators Office</p> <p>iii) Local Authority Complaints Procedure Susan Riddle – Corporate Complaints Manager, The London Borough of Brent</p>
3.10 – 3.30	Break
3.30 – 4.50	<p>Workshop II – Second tier Ombudsman complaints system Led by a senior member of the Ombudsman's staff, with hands-on experience of complaint investigation.</p> <p>What should you do when the internal complaints procedure doesn't work? This session offers an insider's guide to the Ombudsman Service, and how to use it to get results for your client.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How can you make the Ombudsman service work effectively for your client? • How do you write a good complaints letter? What key information do you need to include to start an investigation? • What happens in an investigation? • How can advisers help? • What remedies can the Ombudsman provide? • How can the Ombudsman take urgent action? <p>Each workshop will focus on the procedures and complaints areas specific to a different Ombudsman service.</p> <p>Choose from the following focuses:</p> <p>i) Parliamentary & Health Service Ombudsman Hilary York – Director of Investigations, PHSO - Complaints against the administrative actions of a wide range of government departments and other public bodies, or the conduct of organisations acting on their behalf.</p> <p>ii) Local Government Ombudsman Frank Edwards and Richard Shaw – Assistant Ombudsmen, LGO - Complaints about most council matters including housing, planning, education and social services.</p>
4.50 – 5.20	Q & A
5.20 – 5.30	Closing remarks

Booking form

I would like to book place(s) on the PLP advisers' training day on 25th October 2006 in London.

Workshop preferences (please circle):

Workshop 1: DWP Complaints Procedure
Inland Revenue Adjudicators Office
Local Authority Complaints Procedure

Workshop 2: Parliamentary & Health Service Ombudsman
Local Government Ombudsman

It would be very helpful in planning the day to best meet your needs if you could tell us in the space below what the most useful focus(es) would be for you in the second workshop.

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Name: _____

Position: _____

Organisation: _____

Address: _____

Postcode: _____

Tel: _____ Fax: _____

Email: _____

I enclose a cheque for £ / Please invoice me for £..... (delete where applicable). If paying by purchase order, please raise it with your accounts department before booking.

Fee: £50 per delegate

Please return to: Hannah Jones, Training Department, Public Law Project, 150 Caledonian Road, London N1 9RD. Tel: 020 7697 2196. Fax: 020 7837 7048. Email: h.jones@publiclawproject.org.uk