

## Administrative Review Board

### Treating complaints about States services fairly

#### **What does the Administrative Review Board do?**

The Administrative Review Board (ARB) independently reviews complaints made by the public about the actions and decisions of States committees. For example, someone might feel that they have not received timely medical care or their child's educational needs have not been met.

The person making the complaint must already have gone through the complaints process for the committee concerned. The Administrative Review Board is a further stage if the person complaining is not satisfied with the committee's response.

The Complaints and Review Panels of the Administrative Review Board are both new panels – their members were recruited in Summer 2019. Prior to a change in the law, complaints about States committees had been referred to the Chief Executive of the States of Guernsey.

This new system involving members of the public was introduced to make the complaints process more clearly independent.

There are certain complaints the ARB can't handle, but there are many that they can. If the ARB is not appropriate, the staff team is happy to steer Islanders in the right direction.

#### **What does an ARB member do?**

Panels

The ARB is made up of two panels:

**The Complaints Panel** – the evidence for each complaint is examined by four members of this panel to decide whether it meets the criteria to go forward to a Review Board for a public hearing.

**The Review Panel** – if a case is approved by the Complaints Panel, a member of this panel is selected to be the independent member on a four-person Review Board. The Review Board holds a public hearing to decide whether to uphold the person's complaint against a States Committee.

There are up to ten members of both the Complaints Panel and the Review Panel. All are members of the public, representing their island. Generally, the same ten people are members of both panels at the same time but you can opt to be a member of just one of them.

### Responsibilities

As a member of the ARB, you will be:

- Analysing documents and examining evidence carefully and impartially
- Listening to, and questioning, both parties in the case
- Working as a team to make a decision
- Reviewing a written summary of your conclusions

## **How do you get appointed?**

### Recruitment process

Members of the Complaints and Review Panels have only just been recruited but in the future, the Administrative Review Board will advertise for new members to replace people who have stood down.

To apply, you will be asked to read some background information and submit your CV and a covering letter.

If you are shortlisted, you will be interviewed at Frossard House by the President of Policy and Resources, the States Chief Executive and the Principal Officer for the ARB.

If successful, your name will be agreed by the Policy and Resources Committee and submitted to the States Assembly for approval.

## **What skills do you need?**

### Skills

No specific qualifications are needed. The Complaints and Review Panels of the Administrative Review Board are making decisions on behalf of the people of Guernsey and therefore a diversity of experience and skills is important.

The following would be beneficial:

- experience of complaints handling
- experience on other tribunals
- general legal experience
- involvement with States policies and services
- business experience

As with all tribunals, you will need to enjoy studying and interpreting complex information, in both written and verbal form, to pinpoint the key facts of the case.

You will need excellent communication and interpersonal skills as you will be asking questions of, and listening to, a wide variety of people.

You will need to make balanced, open-minded, unbiased decisions, taking into account relevant legislation and previous tribunal decisions.

You will be working as part of a team but you will need to make up your own mind and be able to persuade and challenge others without being confrontational.

## **What support or training is there?**

### Training

You will receive two full days of training, a few weeks apart. The training will be on a weekday chosen to suit the availability of those taking part.

The training will cover the skills needed by all tribunal members generally, plus specific training relating to the function of the Administrative Review Board. It will include practice cases.

### Support

The ARB process is managed by a Principal States Officer and her deputy. The officers help members of the public to make a complaint and States officers to respond. They also support the members of the Panels to perform their roles.

The officers organise the schedule, prepare the paperwork and are available to offer guidance if you have questions.

You will also be supported by the Chair of your Panel, the Deputy Chair and the other members, especially those who already have tribunal experience.

## **What's the time commitment?**

### Reviews

Each Complaints Panel member is likely to be asked to sit on three or four cases a year, on average. This is approximate as there can be periods when several complaints arise at once and other periods where there are none.

Cases vary in complexity. The time commitment per case is between twenty and forty hours. This includes all preparation and meeting time.

Meetings are held at Les Cotils, Frossard House or at the headquarters of the States committee.

## Hearings

If you are part of the Review Panel and are asked to be the independent member on a Tribunal for a public hearing this will take a morning, plus between four and eight hours of preparation.

Only one member of the ten person Review Panel is needed for each hearing so you are only likely to be called on every few years.

Review meetings and hearings are held on a weekday convenient to the participants, usually at Les Cotils.

## **Do you get paid?**

### Remuneration

You may claim £76 per half day.

Reasonable expenses, including travel from other islands in the Bailiwick, will be paid.

## **Rewards and downsides**

### Rewards

You will ensure that States committees are accountable to the public they serve and you will be helping islanders to feel heard and reassured that mistakes will not happen again.

You will also be making sure that the island runs smoothly by helping prevent the work of States committees being disrupted by complaints about matters that are not legitimately within their control.

## Downsides

On the Complaints Panel, it can be frustrating if you understand the point of view of the person making the complaint but the case does not meet the definitions in the legislation and therefore cannot go forward for a full hearing.

If you are on the Review Panel you will not be asked to sit on many cases.

## Where can I find out more?

### More information

Go to [www.gov.gg/reviewboard](http://www.gov.gg/reviewboard) for detailed information about the Administrative Review Board.

Read our [interview with Audrey Branch](#), a member of the Complaints Panel.

### Download this information

To download all of this information about the Administrative Review Board as a PDF, click the PDF symbol on the right of this page.

### Corrections

This description of the Administrative Review Board has been researched by Women in Public Life volunteers. If you spot an error, please do let us know by emailing [hello@womeninpubliclife.gg](mailto:hello@womeninpubliclife.gg).

## Questions?

*If you have a question about the Administrative Review Board that isn't answered on this page, please email us at [hello@womeninpubliclife.gg](mailto:hello@womeninpubliclife.gg). We'll research the answer and then publish it here to help inform others who might be curious about the same thing.*