

Position Description - Early Resolution Officer

Reports to Early Resolution Team Leader

Background

Utilities Disputes (UDL) is a not-for-profit organisation, providing dispute resolution and other related services to the utilities sector.

The Early Resolution team receives and resolves complaints between energy retailers, lines distributors and water providers and their customers in a timely and cost-effective manner. The Early Resolution team also consider objections to broadband installation on shared property and handles enquiries, referrals and complaints via phone, email and live webchat.

Our office consists of a focused team who work together in a supportive environment. We apply a fair and reasonable approach to all aspects of our work to ensure we are accessible, independent, fair, accountable, efficient and effective. We are committed to the health and safety of our staff and communicate in plain English.

Utilities Disputes welcomes flexible working and supports people of all gender identities, ages, ethnicities, sexual orientations, disabilities, and religions.

The Early Resolution Officer must apply the principle of independence to all aspects of their work; be committed to health and safety and communicate in plain English.

Purpose of role

The main purpose of the Early Resolution Officer is to provide high quality independent information, advice and guidance to consumers and providers who contact UDL by phone live chat and email and to capture and respond to enquiries and complaints received by UDL.

The Early Resolution Officer will also apply a range of basic Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) strategies and techniques to resolve suitable consumer complaints. This will include informal methods to assist complainants to resolve their complaints.

The Early Resolution Officer will produce high quality and plain English complaint summaries and draft decisions on appropriate complaints for sign off by the Commissioner and Deputy Commissioner.

The Early Resolution Officer also will provide support and assistance to First Contact Officers and the First Contact Team Leader to process and escalate complaints from intake through to deadlock.

The Early Resolution Officer may also provide administrative and investigative support across the operations teams from time to time.

Person specification

Professional skills

- Able to identify complaint issues, determine options and apply high quality dispute resolution methods and techniques to resolve them
- Ability to effectively deal with and manage challenging behaviour by complainants and providers
- Highly resilient and able to remain clear headed and positive when handling challenging complaints, calls and enquiries
- Good written and oral communication skills
- Demonstrates a sound understanding of the Treaty of Waitangi and the applicability of its principles in the workplace and community
- Interest or experience in mediation or conciliation
- Enter data accurately and efficiently
- Able to analyse and interpret technical information
- Research, analysis and problem-solving skills
- Carry out investigations
- Able to analyse arguments effectively
- Consistent use of plain English principles
- Able to apply independence (both actual and perceived)
- Able to apply the principles of natural justice
- Able to learn and interpret new and complex technical information
- Understands and demonstrates independence
- Computer literacy

Interpersonal skills

- Can simplify complex information
- Resilient
- Willing and able to deliver challenging discussions
- Builds rapport by remaining independent
- Able to interact with people from diverse cultures and backgrounds
- Asks effective questions

- Demonstrates active listening skills
- Adaptable
- Ability to work independently
- Has an eye for detail
- Patient
- Self-starter
- Focus on continuous improvement
- Effective time manager
- Prioritises tasks effectively to meet applicable deadlines and timeframes
- Collaborates with colleagues
- Ability to multi-task and solve problems with minimal direction
- Productive and able to build constructive relationships with other colleagues and teams
- Good sense of humour

Responsibilities

- Apply knowledge and skills to a range of ADR strategies and techniques to resolve suitable consumer complaints.
- Use an understanding of dispute resolution methods and techniques to identify complaint issues, determine options and provide advice and action on how to resolve them.
- Receive initial consumer and provider calls, emails, live chat, enquiries and website contact
- Identify complaint issues to determine appropriate options used to provide appropriate guidance and advice to consumers and providers
- Facilitate the early resolution of complaints using a range of basic ADR strategies within agreed timeframes
- Produce high quality written or oral responses to enquiries
- Contribute to our Treaty of Waitangi competency to include relevant tikanga and culturally responsive principles into our work

- Produce high quality complaint documentation, including complaint summaries and draft decisions on appropriate complaints for sign off by the Commissioner and Deputy Commissioner.
- Display a commitment to continuous improvement and is able to identify areas where further development and learning is required
- Escalate issues and potential high risk or complex complaints and is able to provide support and advice to other team members and managers in relation to such matters
- Maintain accurate records of enquiries made and responses given in the complaints database
- Ensure complaint files meet UDL'S performance standards and provide information about UDL to consumer advocacy groups
- Present a positive image on behalf of UDL in all interactions with consumers and providers
- Take time to learn and apply the rules of UDL'S schemes
- Ensure information received is kept confidential and is aware off and meets our privacy requirements
- Provide guidance and mentorship to First Contact Officers
- Undertake other tasks as required

Competencies

An Early Resolution Officer is expected to demonstrate the following competencies:

| Position competency | Performance measure |
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| Delivery and detail focused | Delivers accurately and in a timely manner to a high professional standard. Has an eye for detail, both numeric and written. Evidenced by accurate capture and recording of key information provided by those contacting the office. |
| Independence and ethics | Consistently maintains and demonstrates independence in all communications, oral and written, internal and external. Adheres to an appropriate (for the setting) and effective set of core values and beliefs during both good and bad times. Acts in line with those values and practices what they preach. |
| Personal effectiveness | Effectively plans, prioritises and manages own time and work. Ability to adapt to meet the differing requirements of the office during the year. |

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| Dispute resolution | Uses dispute resolution methods and techniques including active listening and effective questioning to effectively resolve suitable complaints. |
| Focus on continuous improvement | Continually identifies ways to improve oneself and complaint handling processes and procedures. |
| Expert knowledge | Effectively manages interactions between all parties with clear, accurate and resolution focused communication. Good at learning new industry, company, product, or technical knowledge Identifies the key issues and gathers relevant information to support the resolution of a complaint. Evidence of rapport building with parties, supporting the achievement of complaint resolution, while demonstrating independence. |
| Results focused | Achieves the Schemes performance standards set in accordance with the annual business plan. |
| Teamwork | Strong, supportive team player who demonstrates initiative and enthusiasm to all aspects of the role. |
| Relationship building | Builds and manages effective relationships with stakeholder groups. Evidence of positive relationships through feedback from members and other stakeholders. Evidence of tangible outcomes and results from those relationships. Maintaining the values and ethics of UDL through feedback from those engaged in a relationship with UDL. |
| Action orientated | Pursues work with energy and accuracy. Translates plans into action, taking responsibility at a tactical level for getting the job done to a high standard. |
| Risk/reputation awareness | Effectively identifies and manages risks to UDL. Complies with UDL's privacy and confidentiality requirements. |
| Conflict Management | Steps up to conflicts, seeing them as opportunities. Reads situations quickly and is good at focused listening. Can hammer out tough agreements and settle disputes equitably. Able to find common ground and get cooperation with minimum noise. |
| Composure | Is cool under pressure. Does not become defensive or irritated when times are tough. Is considered mature and can be counted on to hold things together during tough times. Can handle stress and is not knocked off balance by the unexpected. Doesn't show frustration when resisted or blocked and is a settling influence in a crisis. |
| Written Communication | Is able to write clearly and succinctly in a variety of communication settings and styles. Can get messages across that have the desired effect Understands and utilises the plain English writing standard. Produces written work with minimal errors. |