

Position Description

First Contact Officer | Pou Whakapārangā Tuatahi

Reports to Team Leader

Mō mātou | About us

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

We are a focused team who work together in a supportive environment. UDL applies 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.

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

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

Mō te Tūranga | About the role

The main purpose of the First Contact Officer is to provide high quality independent information, guidance and advice 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 First Contact 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 such as active listening and effective questioning to assist complainants to resolve their complaints.

The First Contact Officer will produce high quality and plain English complaint summaries and process and escalate complaints from intake through to deadlock.

The First Contact Officer will also be involved in other administrative support work for the operations teams and provide investigative assistance from time to time.

Professional skills

- Able to identify complaint issues, determine options and apply basic 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
- Demonstrates a willingness to develop 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 learn, analyse and interpret technical information
- Able to analyse complaints and arguments effectively
- Consistent use of plain English principles
- Excellent written and oral communication skills
- Understands and demonstrates independence
- Computer literate

Interpersonal skills

- Simplify complex information
- Resilient
- Asks effective questions
- Demonstrates active listening skills
- Willing and able to engage in challenging conversations
- Adaptable
- Ability to work independently
- Has an eye for detail
- Patient
- Self-starter
- Focus on continuous improvement
- Effective time manager
- Prioritises tasks effectively
- Productive, and collaborates and supports colleagues

Responsibilities

- Apply a range of basic ADR strategies, techniques and methods to identify complaint issues, determine options, provide guidance to facilitate the First Contact suitable complaints.
- Receive initial consumer and provider calls, emails, live chat, enquiries and website contact
- Take appropriate First Contact steps
- Provide written or oral responses to enquirers where appropriate
- Contribute to our Treaty of Waitangi competency to include relevant tikanga and culturally responsive principles into our work
- Maintain accurate records of enquiries made and responses given in the complaints database
- Draft complaint documents, including complaint summaries, in Plain English and ensure complaint files meet UDL's performance standards
- Provide information about UDL to consumers and inform them of any relevant advocacy groups
- Will be adept facilitating communication, and have a good awareness of alternative dispute resolution processes
- Ensure information received is kept confidential and is aware off and meets our privacy requirements
- 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
- 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 provide support and advice to other team members and managers in relation to such matters
- Undertake other tasks as required

Position competency	Performance measure
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	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.

Dispute resolution	Uses dispute resolution techniques including active listening and effective questioning to resolve complaints at intake.
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. 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 the Utilities Disputes through feedback from those engaged in a relationship with Utilities Disputes.
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 Utilities Disputes. Complies with Utilities Disputes privacy and confidentiality requirements.
Conflict Management	Steps up to conflicts, seeing them as opportunities. Reads situations quickly and is good at focused listening. 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. Can handle challenging people and is not easily knocked off balance by the unexpected.
Written Communication	Can 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.