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HMRC internal manual

Complaints and Remedy Guidance

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(/government/organisations/hm-revenue-customs)

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CRG6150 - Payments for worry and distress: Poor complaint handling

Poor complaints handling may make an already difficult situation worse and affect the complainant similarly. Where that is the case then, as a separate issue from costs, you should consider a payment where a complaint has been handled very badly or there has been unreasonable delay in dealing with the complaint. In considering this you will normally need to look at the impact our poor handling has had on the customer.

Examples of poor complaints handling might include being rude to the customer, losing their letters, not admitting to mistakes, or making new ones. With delays you will need to use similar

criteria as for any unreasonable delay and ask yourself what would be a reasonable time to deal with the complaint given all the circumstances of the case.

Payments for poor complaints handling are modest and will usually be in the range of £25 to £500. Most payments will be at the lower end of this scale and only exceptional cases would exceed it. But remember that there may be grounds to make a payment for both poor complaints handling and worry and distress if the circumstances warrant it. (This could, of course, be in the form of a single payment covering more than one head.)

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