

CIFO guidance on complaint categorisation

Introduction

The Channel Islands Financial Ombudsman (CIFO) was established by law in Jersey and the Bailiwick of Guernsey to resolve complaints about financial services provided in or from the Channel Islands. CIFO uses a complaint management system (CMS) to log and record the progress to resolution of all complaints received. The information in this document is provided for financial services providers (FSPs) as, during the complaint process, they will be asked to verify the information recorded against each complaint case against them is correct on CIFO's CMS. The information below explains some of the key information fields that are recorded for each complaint received. Certain information fields are included in statistical data already published by CIFO in quarterly complaint statistics and in the statistical section of CIFO's annual reports. Some may also be published as part of our summary statistical data on complaints that will be broken down by FSP.

The following are descriptions of the relevant information fields to assist FSPs to verify the complaint information collected.

Case Number

CIFO's unique complaint case reference identification number (e.g., 20-000123).

Primary Complainant

This is the name of the individual who has made the complaint, either as an individual or on behalf of a micro-enterprise or a charity. CIFO will never publish this information.

Primary Complainant's Country/Region

This is the jurisdiction in which the complainant was resident at the time the complaint was made.

FSPs

This shows the financial services provider (FSP) that was the subject of the complaint: the legal respondent, and usually the holder of the relevant licence from the local financial sector regulator, that is responsible for what is being complained about.

FSP's Country/Region

This shows the jurisdiction from where the financial services provider (FSP) provided the financial services complained about.

Sector and Product

CIFO uses 5 sectors to describe the broad area of financial services relating to each complaint. These are: Banking, Insurance, Investments, Pensions, and Non-bank money services/credit. Each sector lists the financial product or service to which the event complained about relates below:

Banking

- Business account
- Consumer loan
- Credit card account
- Current account
- Financial advice
- Fixed-term deposit account
- Hire purchase agreement
- Money transfer
- Mortgage
- Other investments
- Overdraft facility on current account
- Payment protection insurance
- Safe custody/safety deposit box
- Savings account

Insurance

- Automobile/bicycle/vehicle insurance
- Health insurance
- Home building/contents insurance
- Income/profit protection
- Legal insurance
- Life assurance policy
- Payment protection insurance
- Travel insurance
- Whole of life insurance (Investment)
- Home emergency insurance
- Business insurance
- Other insurance

Investment/Funds

- Financial advice
- Money transfer
- Mutual funds, unit trusts, collective investment schemes

- Stocks and shares
- Other investments

Non-Bank Money Services/Credit

This sector is for non-banks providing these types of money or credit services:

- Consumer loan
- Debt collection
- Money transfer
- Mortgage
- Payment protection
- Personal loan
- Prepaid Euro card
- Other non-bank money services/credit

Pension

- Private pension product
- Employer pension scheme
- Public sector pension

Primary Issue

This shows the issue involved in the complaint. The available options are:

- Closure of account
- Dispute payment out
- Enforcement/collection
- Fees/charges
- Interest charged/paid
- Mis-selling/Unsuitable Advice
- Non-payment of claim
- Poor administration or delay
- Refusal of service
- Transaction error
- Fraud - Other
- Fraud – APP
- Fraud - OTP
- Power of Attorney
- Grant of Probate
- Joint account
- Suitability
- Suspension of service
- Other issue
- Capacity
- Circumstance

Complainant Type

This is the type of complainant, for example: Consumer/individual, Charity, Microenterprise, or Trustee.

Outcome

This shows the outcome of CIFO's complaint resolution process. The available options are:

- Determined – Ombudsman's final decision issued
- Settled – Resolved informally before a final decision
- Out of mandate – CIFO unable to review complaint on its merits
- Withdrawn by complainant – Complainant chose to withdraw the complaint before it concluded

CIFO's Principal Ombudsman will keep this guidance under review in light of complaint cases received by CIFO and will publish updated guidance if necessary. This version is correct as of 14 April 2026. Any comments or suggestions on this guidance may be sent to consultations@ci-fo.org.