



Fiosrú

Oifig an
Ombudsman
Póilíneachta

Office of
the Police
Ombudsman

Victims of Crime Charter

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THE ROLE OF FIOSRÚ

From 02nd April 2025, Fiosrú, Office of the Police Ombudsman will take on the role of dealing with complaints from the public concerning members of garda personnel, a role previously undertaken by the Garda Síochána Ombudsman Commission (GSOC).

We receive complaints about many different types of concerns in relation to garda personnel.

Complaints are handled in different ways depending on what the complaint is about.

If we are investigating a criminal allegation, you as the complainant will be treated as a victim of crime and afforded the same rights as you would get during a Garda investigation.

WHAT YOU CAN EXPECT FROM FIOSRÚ

Fiosrú aims to treat people who make complaints in a sensitive and understanding manner, while trying to resolve the issue as fairly and quickly as possible.

OUR KEY VALUES ARE:

- Putting the public interest first;
- Respecting the human rights of everyone with whom we deal;
- Promoting equality of treatment of everyone with whom we deal;
- Making decisions based on a thorough and fair analysis of the information and evidence available;
- Being open and as transparent as we can by communicating and explaining our actions; and
- Being committed to providing a high standard of public service.

For further information please visit our website www.fiosru.ie.

WHAT HAPPENS WHEN YOU MAKE A COMPLAINT TO US

If you are a victim of a crime that you think has been committed by a Garda, we will:

- Acknowledge your complaint in writing within one week of receiving it, and give you a case reference number;
- Carefully consider your complaint and make an independent and impartial decision about whether it will be investigated or not;
- Give you information about relevant supports available to you from other agencies - emotional, legal or other supports. Our website has a list of agencies, as well as the type of information you can request from us. You can also ask the Fiosrú officer who is investigating your complaint for this information;
- Explain to you what type of investigation will be undertaken;
- Write to tell you if we decide not to investigate your complaint – and tell you the reasons why.

IF YOUR COMPLAINT WARRANTS INVESTIGATION - HOW WE WILL INVESTIGATE?

Fiosrú is committed to investigating all complaints in an efficient, effective and timely manner. We will:

- Interview you in a way that is sensitive to your needs in a place that is suitable for you as soon as we can. If you wish, you can bring another person to support you during the interview unless there is any concern that the person you choose would not serve your best interests or would harm the investigation or any criminal proceedings. If that happens, you can choose someone else.
- Gather the available evidence in a fair and impartial manner.
- Assess whether you need any special measures to help you best engage with the investigation, or any special protection measures if you are vulnerable. If that is the case, we will let you know the possible options open to you.
- Let you know what will be required of you during the investigation and inform you of the types of information you can request.
- Keep in regular contact with you to let you know how the investigation is going.
- Always give you contact details so you can contact us when you need to.

WHAT HAPPENS AFTER FIOSRÚ INVESTIGATES YOUR COMPLAINT

Following a Fiosrú investigation, we will do some or all of the following, depending on the case:

SEND A FILE TO THE DPP

Where there is evidence that a criminal offence may have been committed, we will send a file on the investigation to the Office of the Director of Public Prosecution (DPP) and ask for a direction on whether a criminal prosecution should take place.

TELL YOU THE DPP'S DECISION

We will let you know the DPP's decision. If the DPP decides not to prosecute, you can request the reasons why – either through Fiosrú or directly from the DPP. If they decide to prosecute, they will let you know what you can expect to happen during the process. The DPP will either make direct contact with you to tell you this, or they will ask Fiosrú to tell you. We provide information on the persons charged with an alleged offence, the nature of the offence, any court dates, and other information we think you need to know. Further detail is set out in the Fiosrú Victims of Crime Right to Information leaflet or from our website www.fiosru.ie.

SEND A FILE TO THE GARDA COMMISSIONER

If we feel that the conduct of a Garda was in breach of Garda Regulations, then we will send a file on the investigation to the Garda Commissioner so that Gardai can consider taking further action. We do not have a role in the decision the Garda Commissioner takes, but we will inform you of what to expect to happen during the process, and we will tell you the Garda Commissioner's decision.

DISCONTINUE AN INVESTIGATION

Following an investigation of your complaint, Fiosrú may decide not to continue with the investigation. If we decide to discontinue the investigation, we will write to you to explain the reasons why. When we write to you, we will also explain how you can request a review of the decision to discontinue, which must be done within 28 days of us informing you of the decision.

CLOSE AN INVESTIGATION

Where the investigation does not find evidence that a criminal offence or a breach of the Garda disciplinary regulations may have occurred, we will close the investigation. There is no internal review facility for investigations which have been closed.

HOW FIOSRÚ WILL RESPOND TO YOUR NEEDS.

At all times, we aim to be courteous, helpful, respectful and professional. If you are upset about a crime or other traumatic incident, we will respond to your needs in a caring and sensitive manner.

Fiosrú hopes to meet your needs by:

LISTENING TO YOU

We will give you the opportunity to make a complaint. We will respond to your concerns and treat you fairly and with respect.

PROCESSING COMPLAINTS EFFICIENTLY

We will do all we can to ensure that your complaint is dealt with in a timely manner and to ensure you have confidence in our decisions.

BEING PROFESSIONAL AND COURTEOUS

We will abide by the principles of Quality Customer Service, do what we promise to do and do our best to give you the right information in a timely manner.

BEING OPEN AND HONEST AT ALL TIMES

We will update you regularly on the process of the investigation and answer your questions as fully as we can.

PROTECTING YOUR PRIVACY

We will keep accurate records of your dealings with us and keep those records safe.

BEING ACCESSIBLE

We will be available to answer your questions in person, by telephone, by letter or electronically.

HOW FIOSRÚ RESPONDS TO DIFFERENT CATEGORIES OF COMPLAINANTS

Fiosrú recognises that different categories of complainants might need additional supports such as follows:

VICTIMS OF SEXUAL OFFENCES, GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE OR VIOLENCE IN A CLOSE RELATIONSHIP

We will treat you with special sensitivity and we will:

- Ensure that you are interviewed by a Fiosrú officer of the same gender, if you wish;
- Provide you, if you request it and if it is possible, with a doctor of the same gender;
- Provide you with details of support organisations for victims of sexual offences.

FAMILIES OF PEOPLE WHO HAVE DIED FOLLOWING CONTACT WITH GARDAÍ

In the cases of this type which come under Fiosrú's remit we will provide you with a Family Liaison Officer who will keep in contact with you or any other person that you have asked to help you. Your specific needs will be assessed, with your input, and the Family Liaison Officer will be able to give you information about support services.

Fiosrú will make sure that you receive the same information and treatment as any other complainant.

CHILDREN

Fiosrú recognises that children - people under 18 years - who are victims of crime will always have needs that require consideration. When assessing these needs, Fiosrú will respect your views.

When making decisions which concern you, Fiosrú will take your best interests into account.

We will:

- Comply with the guidelines under the Children First Act 2015 and National Guidelines for the Protection Welfare of Children
- Explain our processes
- Provide you with a specialist interviewer if you need one
- Ensure your safety and protection
- As well as keeping your parent, guardian or representative informed, if you wish, we will also keep you up to date.

PEOPLE WITH ADDITIONAL NEEDS

If you have any form of disability, we will take your particular needs or requirements you may have into account when communicating with you.

If you have any difficulty with reading or writing, we will be sensitive to your needs.

If you are not fluent in English, we will provide a free translation service so that you will receive the same quality of service as far as possible.

IF WE DO NOT MEET YOUR EXPECTATIONS

If we do not meet your expectations and you would like to ask questions, make suggestions or make a complaint about our service, you can contact us at the details below.

HOW TO CONTACT US

ADDRESS

Fiosrú, Office of the Police Ombudsman

150 Abbey Street Upper

Dublin 1

D01 FT73

PHONE

0818 600 800

or 01-871 6600

EMAIL

customerservice@fiosru.ie

WEBSITE

www.fiosru.ie