

Ombudsman Annual Report

2017



Canada Post • Postes Canada

Ombudsman



Ombudsman's message

Our Office investigates complaints when something has been handled unfairly, if unreasonable delays are experienced, or there is a failure to follow proper procedures. We get involved when Canada Post's own processes have not resolved the issue, and we are the final appeal forum when a disappointed customer seeks redress beyond Canada Post's complaint resolution process. We also complement Canada Post's continuing commitment to quality and good customer experience.

In 2017, we handled eight per cent fewer appeals and saw a decline of five per cent in the number of cases we investigated. In fact, we have seen a reduction in each of the top 10 appeal categories we monitor. This is in sharp contrast with the increase in parcel volume that Canada Post handled during the year, due to the growth of online shopping. Appeals involving the Canadian Postal Service Charter also declined by 10 per cent during the year, reflecting improvements in access to the customer service channel.

Jean-Marc Nantais, Ombudsman

Who we are

The Office of the Ombudsman is independent of Canada Post staff and management and reports directly to the Chairperson of the Board of Directors.

We have the authority to investigate an appeal, seek clarification, confirm the facts and assemble relevant evidence to make fair and equitable recommendations.

By identifying trends, focusing on prevention and recommending changes where warranted, we provide Canada Post with another perspective to improve service. We see every case as a learning opportunity for the Corporation to identify preventative or mitigating measures. This feedback loop is an integral element of our day-to-day work – and of our value to Canadians.

Typical issues raised that we cannot assist with*

- 1** Intercepting an item in Canada Post's network, which is not only extremely difficult but also illegal without proper authorization.
- 2** Settling a claim for loss or damage with the receiver rather than the sender (the party who contracted with Canada Post to deliver it).
- 3** Changing a destination address of an item after it is posted.
- 4** Contravening legislation or intervening on matters that are before the court.
- 5** Setting corporate policies, such as mail classifications, product specifications or pricing, and intervening on matters related to Canada Post's relationships with its employees, contractors and suppliers.

What we need to better assist you

We always commit to a timeline for a response. We research existing records and seek additional input and clarification as needed. Our investigations are considerably faster and our recommendations are better informed when our customers provide all the information they have at the outset.

- A** Contact Canada Post first. Give Customer Service staff the opportunity to resolve the issue. Our office can intervene only after Canada Post has attempted to resolve the issue.
- B** Document the issue fully the first time. Every new issue, element or evidence can cause delays.
- C** Include supporting evidence upon filing the appeal. This could be receipts (proof of mailing); photographs (of the address label, packaging or damage); proof of the item's value (such as receipts or the cost to replace it) and the addressee's contact information.

* Our ability to assist is limited by Canada Post's operational capabilities, governing legislation and scope of our Office's mandate.



Key statistics

Despite much higher parcel volumes due to online shopping, the number of appeals we handled fell in 2017.



Appeals submitted:

5,449
(8% decline)



Appeals investigated:

2,497
(46% of all appeals)



**Investigations resulting
in remediation:**

1,141
(46% of all investigations)

Top appeals



Missing item:

414
(7% decline)



Claims dispute:

271
(4% decline)



Service Charter*:

2,025
(10% decline)

* Special category encompassing frequent delivery, reliable delivery, secure delivery, convenient access.

The leading appeals by category submitted in 2017:

- The customer's parcel went missing or was damaged or delivered late.
- The customer felt Canada Post's indemnity in a claims dispute was unreasonable.
- The customer felt Canada Post did not comply to the Canadian Postal Service Charter regarding access to postal services, mode of delivery or secure delivery.
- The customer was unhappy with the quality of their experience when interacting with Canada Post staff (at a retail counter or with a delivery or customer service agent).
- The customer felt the delivery agent did not attempt to deliver a parcel but instead left a notice telling them to pick it up at a post office.

Recommendations to customers to avoid having a postal issue

- 1** Ask about the options to insure a parcel you're mailing at a post office. Understand the limits to Canada Post's liability for loss or damage, especially for valued items.
- 2** Check what speed and options you need. Confirm your purchase. Review and keep your receipt.
- 3** Buyer beware: Know who you are dealing with when you shop or trade online, especially if you pay electronically. Canada Post cannot assume liability resulting from fraud by a shipper or a receiver.
- 4** Proper packaging: Only you know the physical characteristics of your item, and how to secure it as mechanical equipment handles it during processing.*
- 5** Proper addressing: If the mailing address is incomplete, Canada Post will not speculate on where to deliver it. Delivery is to a specific address, not to a specific person.*
- 6** Canada Post's Mail Forwarding and Hold Mail services are for Lettermail and do not include parcels. If you are expecting a parcel, tell the sender your current address.

* See the packaging and addressing tips on canadapost.ca.

What we do

We confirm compliance with existing policies, practices and procedures. We seek the root cause of the issues and mediate a fair outcome. We facilitate communications between the customers and relevant parties at Canada Post. We periodically report back to senior management on our observations.

How we operate

We promptly acknowledge and review customers' appeals. We communicate the course of action within five business days. The complexity and severity of the issue determines how quickly we process an appeal.



1 Submit your appeal online at canadapost.ca/ombudsman



2 Triage based on severity and impact



3 Investigate with corporate and local management and third parties as required, and mediate a resolution



4 Feedback to customer, local management and senior executives



5 Follow up as required, to ensure solutions are sustained

Contact us:

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