



GRIEVANCE REDRESS MECHANISM (GRM)

November 2022

Planning Institute of Jamaica

16 Oxford Road, Kingston 5, Jamaica West Indies
Telephone: (876) 960-9339 Facsimile: (876) 906-5011
Email: info@pioj.gov.jm Website: pioj.gov.jm

Section I

Introduction and Background

1. The Grievance Redress Mechanism (GRM) is a corporate-level grievance redress tool aimed at promoting the principles of good governance and environmental stewardship, while complying with national laws and regulations. It also addresses the Environmental and Social Framework (ESF) Environmental and Social Standard (ESS) 2 – Consultation and Grievance Mechanism. The GRM is designed to receive complaints from project-affected people and communities who believe that a PIOJ implemented and/or executed project has caused or will cause them harm. The GRM facilitates a prompt response to grievances by providing support to Project teams to address the issues raised in a quick and effective manner.
2. The GRM is led by the Deputy Director General for Corporate Governance and Management, supported by the Grievance Redress Team (GRT). The GRT is selected based on competence and experience and consists, at minimum, of specialists from the areas of finance, social development and environment. The team also includes the manager for the project to which the grievance is related. Additionally, a legal officer will provide legal guidance throughout the process of resolving grievances and, where necessary, approve documents.
3. The GRM is effective as of December 1, 2022.

Section II

Submission of a Complaint

Who May Submit a Complaint?

1. **Complainants.** A complaint may be submitted by one or more individuals, or their representatives, who believe they are directly and adversely affected by an active (i.e. not closed) project supported by the PIOJ.
2. **Identity of Complainants.** The complaint must state the name of the individual(s) submitting the complaint, and whether they are Project-affected individual(s) and/or a community or representative.
3. **Confidentiality.** Complainants may ask that their identity be kept confidential. The request for confidentiality should be submitted with the complaint. Confidentiality of personal or classified information will be maintained, if requested.
4. **Representatives.** Complainants may submit a complaint through an authorized representative. The authorized representative must include his/her name and contact details and sign the complaint. The representative must also provide written proof (such as a signed letter by the complainant(s)) of his/her authority to represent and act on behalf of the complainant(s) in relation to the complaint. The GRT will communicate directly with the authorized representative, as necessary and appropriate, and will keep the representative and/or complainant(s) informed about the status of the complaint. Complainants may also submit the complaint on their own behalf and appoint a contact person or persons for all communications regarding the complaint.
5. **Anonymous complaints.** Anonymous complaints will be deemed inadmissible. However, if an anonymous complaint contains specific information about Project-related issues, it will be forwarded to the Project Management Unit for its information and follow-up, where appropriate.

How to Submit a Complaint

A complaint can be submitted in any of the ways outlined below.

Via email: complaints@pioj.gov.jm

Via mail: Planning Institute of Jamaica

16 Oxford Road

Kingston 5

Attn: Grievance Redress Team

Via the PIOJ website: <https://www.pioj.gov.jm/compliance/>

Format and Language of a Complaint

No specific format is required as long as the requisite information is included:

- a. Name (of complainant(s) and representatives); email address; telephone number; address; and nature and reason for complaint as detailed in the section below.

Complainants may use the complaint form available on the PIOJ's website located under "Compliance" at <https://www.pioj.gov.jm/grievance-redress-mechanism-form/> or any format of their choosing.

Content of a Complaint: Required Information

1. **Subject matter of a complaint.** A complaint must allege actual or potential harm resulting from an operation supported by a PIOJ-implemented, executed or funded project and must be deemed to have violated the relevant environmental and social standards outlined in the Planning Institute of Jamaica Environmental and Social Framework or any related national standards.
2. **Substance of a complaint.** The complaint must state the adverse impact(s) allegedly caused or likely to be caused by the Project. This should be supported by available documentation and correspondence, where possible and appropriate, or upon the GRT's request at a later date. The complainant(s) may also indicate the desired outcome of the complaint, i.e., how it may be resolved.
3. **Procurement-related complaints** pertaining to Projects may be submitted to the GRT by bidders or potential bidders (companies or individuals). These complaints will not be processed following GRM procedures but instead in line with the relevant provisions of the Government of Jamaica Procurement Guidelines.

Section III Admissibility

Scope and Admissibility of Complaints

1. Complaints are admissible if they meet the following criteria:
 - The Project is active, i.e., appraisal has begun and the Project has not yet closed
 - The complaint is filed by Project-affected individuals and/or communities, or their representative
 - The complaint alleges that the Project has caused or will cause harm to the individuals and or communities submitting the complaint.
2. Only substantiated or verifiable complaints will be addressed.

Determination of Admissibility

1. **Registration of complaints.** After receipt of a complaint, the GRT immediately registers it in the Complaints Register.
2. Within 5 business days of receipt of the complaint, the following takes place:

- **Notification of receipt.** The GRT notifies the complainant(s) of receipt of the complaint. With the notification of receipt, the GRT may also request additional information from the complainant(s).
 - **Classification of complaint.** The GRT determines whether the issues relate to procurement or to other matters falling within the mandate of the GRT, as set forth in these Procedures. If the complaint is related to procurement, the GRT forwards the complaint to the responsible Procurement Manager. The complaint will be assessed in accordance with the relevant Environment and Social Standard of the ESF.
 - **Commencement of Evaluation/Admissibility Assessment.** The GRT reviews and evaluates the complaint in consultation with relevant staff, and within 10 business days of commencement, determines whether the complaint meets the admissibility criteria set forth above.
3. **Request for additional information.** During the 10-day admissibility assessment period, the GRT may request further information from the complainant(s). If no response is received from the complainant(s) within 10 business days of the request, the GRT contacts the complainant(s) again. If no response is received within 10 business days of the second request, the GRT closes the case and provides written notification of closure. However, even if the case is closed, as long as the complaint contains specific information about Project-related issues, the Project team may act where appropriate.
 4. **Admissible complaints.** If the complaint is admissible, the complainant(s) are notified of admissibility.
 5. **Non-admissible complaints.** If the complaint is non-admissible, the complainant(s) are notified of this decision and the reasons for it, and are referred to relevant institutions, where appropriate. The GRT then closes the case.

Section IV

Formulation of Proposal and Implementation

Formulation of Proposal

1. After declaring the complaint admissible, the GRT and/or the Project team reviews the issues raised and discuss possible ways to move forward. The GRT and/or the Project team contacts the complainant(s) to review the concerns and agree on next steps to address the complaint. This communication occurs no later than 10 business days after the GRT has communicated the admissibility of the complaint to the complainant(s).
2. The Project team, with support and advice from the GRT, formulates a proposal to address the issues raised in the complaint.
3. Proposal to complainant(s). Within 30 business days after determination of admissibility of the complaint, the proposal should be presented to the complainant. In exceptional cases, e.g., for complex complaints or complaints supported by a large number of documents, the time limit provided for in this paragraph may be extended and the complainant(s) will be informed accordingly. The GRT consults with and seeks the input of the complainant(s) on all aspects of the proposal.
4. The proposal should include an action plan with a time frame for its implementation.
 - **Agreement by complainant(s).** If the proposal is accepted by the complainant(s), the Project team implements it according to the process and timeframe set forth in the proposal. Agreement on the proposal should be reached within 30 business days after the initial proposal has been presented to the complainant. If the proposal is accepted by the complainant, the agreement will be signed by both parties.

- The period of 30 days may be extended for an additional 30 days in a case where it is reasonable for extension. In such instances, the GRT will inform the applicant of the reasons for the extension and state the available options.
5. Rejection by complainant(s). If the proposal is rejected by the complainant(s) and/or the complaint cannot be resolved through the process outlined in these procedures, the GRT informs the complainant(s) that no resolution could be reached. The GRT then refers the complainant(s) to other options for remedy, where appropriate such as the Office of the Public Defender.

Implementation of Proposal

1. Implementation. Once the proposal is accepted, the Project Management Unit promptly starts the implementation of the proposal. The proposed time frame will depend on the nature of the actions. The GRT and the Project team will inform the complainant(s) in advance and explain the scope of the action plan and the proposed timeframe.
2. The Project team keeps the GRT and the complainant(s) up to date on the status and progress of the implementation of the proposal until resolution of the complaint. The Project team may request support and advice through the GRM at any point.
3. Monitoring. The GRT maintains close contact with the Project team to ensure that the proposal is implemented within the agreed timeframe. The GRT also maintains contact with the complainant(s) throughout the implementation period until resolution.

Case Closure

1. **Resolution.** The GRM considers the complaint resolved and closes the case when there is agreement with the Project team and the complainant(s) that the proposal has been successfully implemented and the issues addressed.
2. **No satisfactory resolution.** If complainant(s) believe that the complaint has not been addressed through the implementation of the agreed upon proposal, the GRT and Project team engage with the complainant(s) to determine whether and how a satisfactory outcome can be achieved. If these additional consultations do not lead to a further agreement, the GRM refers the complainant(s) to other options for remedy, where possible and appropriate. The GR team then closes the case.
3. **Appeals.** The GRM facilitates an appeals process whereby unsatisfied complainants may appeal through the Director General or may be referred to the Office of the Public Defender.

Section V Other Provisions

Information Sharing and Communication with Complainants

1. The GRT shares with the complainant(s) all information relevant to the case, including updates on the status and progress of the complaint handling process, to the extent possible.
2. The GRT maintains consistent communications with the complainant(s) throughout the process via email, phone communication or other means as preferred by the complainant(s).
3. The GRM is advertised through the project appraisal documents and on the PIOJ's external and internal websites.
4. The GRT will maintain a complaints' register, which contains information on the subject Project but will not include specific details of the complaint or the complainant(s).
5. The GRT will produce an annual report of complaints for submission to the PIOJ Board.