

Grievance Redressal System:

[Extracts from the Telecom Consumers Protection and Redressal of Grievances Regulations, 2007 (3 of 2007) dated 4.5.2007]

TRAI has been receiving a large number of complaints from Telecom Consumers regarding various problems faced by them. Though there is no provision in the TRAI Act for redressal of consumer complaints by the Authority, taking cognizance of the large number of complaints being received by it, the Authority has issued the Telecom Consumers Protection and Redressal of Grievances Regulations, 2007 in May 2007. This Regulation is perhaps the most important piece of regulation in so far as consumers are concerned. The Regulation mandates establishment of Institutional Mechanisms for resolution of consumers' grievances within the company at the level of Call Centre, Nodal Officer and appellate authority

The salient features of the Regulations are:-

a. Call Centre

- Consumers can contact the Call Centre of service provider on toll free number at the first instance for redressal of their grievances.
- Complaints pertaining to fault repair, service disruption and disconnection of service has to be attended within a maximum period of 3 days.
- Other complaints to be attended by the Call Centre within a maximum period of 7 days, subject to time limits laid down in Regulations on Quality of Service.
- The Call Centre to register each complaint by allotting a unique identification number to be called the docket number and communicate docket number to the consumer.
- Intimate the action taken on the complaint to the consumer within the time limit specified.
- Intimate contact details of the Nodal Officer (including his name, telephone no. and address to the customer).

b. Nodal Officer:-

- In case the consumer is not satisfied with the redressal of his grievance at the Call Centre level or in case the Call Centre does not attend to the complaint within the prescribed time limit, he can approach the Nodal Officer for redressal of his grievance.
- All grievances received by the Nodal Officer with respect to fault repair, service disruption and disconnection of service to be got redressed within a maximum period of 3 days.
- Other grievances to be redressed by the Nodal Officer within a maximum period of 10 days of the registration of the grievance.

- Nodal officers to communicate within three days from date of the receipt of the complaint, the unique complaint number to the consumer.
- Intimate the consumer about the resolution or decision thereon within the time limit specified.

c. Appellate authority:-

- In case the consumer is still not satisfied with the redressal of his grievance by the Nodal Officer or in case his complaint is not redressed by the Nodal Officer within the time limit specified or no reply is received regarding resolution of the complaint from Nodal Officer, he can appeal to the appellate authority of the service provider for redressal of his grievance.
- Appellate Authority to decide every appeal within 3 months.

d. Manual of Practice for handling consumer complaints:-

- The service provider to publish a Manual of Practice for handling consumer complaints outlining the various provisions, time limits, benchmarks and procedures for seeking redressal of grievances including information which affects the consumers.
- The Manual to be available for reference at every office of the service provider, the Nodal Officer and the Appellate Authority, at the Call Centres, Sales outlets and Website of the service provider.
- A copy of the Manual or its abridged version (containing salient features such as terms and conditions of service, contact details of Call Center, the Nodal Officer and the Appellate Authority, procedure and time limit for redressal of grievances) to be provided by the service provider or his agent to each consumer at the time of his subscription for service.

e. Supply of usage details to prepaid subscribers

Another complaint often received from the pre-paid subscribers is regarding non-availability of usage details/ itemized bills. The Authority has considered the issue and during detailed consultation with the stakeholders, the view was that supply of usage details/bills to prepaid subscribers involves inordinate amount of effort, time and cost to the service providers. From the discussions, it was clear that it is technically possible to provide itemized usage details. The Authority has mandated that on request from any prepaid subscriber, the service provider shall supply information relating to itemized usage charges on payment of a reasonable cost not exceeding Rs.50/-.

Time Limit for request or redressal of complaint at Call Center

The time limit for service request or redressal of complaint of consumers at the Call Centers under various service parameters is as follows:

A. Basic Service (Wire line):

Serial Number	Service Parameter	Time Limit for service request or redressal of complaint
i.	Provision of Telephone	All cases within seven days (subject to technical feasibility)
ii.	Fault Repair	Within three days
iii.	Shift of Telephone	Within three days
iv.	Termination/Closures of service	Within 7 days
v.	Resolution of Billing/Charging Complaints	100% within four weeks
vi.	Time taken for refund of deposits after closure	All cases of refund of deposits to be made within sixty days after closure

B. Basic Service (Wireless) and Cellular Mobile Telephone Service:

Serial Number	Service Parameter	Time Limit for service request or redressal of complaint
(i)	Billing Performance Resolution of Billing/Charging Complaints	100% within four weeks
(ii)	Time taken for refund after closure.	All cases of refund of deposits to be made within sixty days after closure.
(iii)	Termination/closure of service	Within 7 days

C. Broadband Service

Serial Number	Service Parameter	Time Limit for service request or redressal of complaint
i.	Service Provisioning / Activation Time	All cases within fifteen days (subject to technical feasibility)
ii.	Fault Repair/ Restoration Time	Within three days
iii.	Billing Performance (a) Percentage of Billing Complaints resolved (b) Time taken for refund of deposits after closure	(a) 100% billing complaints to be resolved within four weeks (b) All cases of refund of deposits to be made within sixty days after closure