

Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities

A fact sheet on how to complain to the Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities

Plain English version of:

Fact sheet on the procedure for submitting communications to the Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities under the Optional Protocol to the Convention

CRPD/C/5/2/Rev.1

Note: This is not a United Nations official document.

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1. Introduction

What words mean

Some words are explained in the text.

Other words are in **bold** and are explained at the end of this document, in the word bank on page 12.

What is the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities?

The Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities is a **human rights** agreement.

From now on we call it the Convention.

Many countries have agreed to protect the rights of people with disabilities under the Convention.

The Convention aims to make sure people with disabilities:

- are treated fairly
- have the same chances as people without disabilities
- are fully included in society.

What is the Optional Protocol?

Many human rights agreements have an extra agreement that countries can choose to **ratify** after they ratify the main agreement.

The Optional Protocol to the Convention is one of those extra agreements.

What is the Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities?

The Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities is a group of experts who see how well countries use the Convention.

From now on we call it the Committee.

The Committee also helps countries understand what to do to make sure people with disabilities have their rights.

2. What the Optional Protocol says

The Optional Protocol to the Convention became **valid** on 3 May 2008.

It says the Committee can accept complaints from people or groups who say their rights have been **violated**.

The Optional Protocol is available in plain English on our website at [\[link tbc\]](#).

3. Who can complain to the Committee

A person or group from a country that agreed to the Convention and the Optional Protocol can send a complaint.

People with all kinds of disabilities can complain, even if they don't have legal rights in their country.

Someone else can also complain to the Committee for a person or group if they have their signed permission.

If they don't have their permission, they must tell the Committee why they're complaining without it.

4. How to complain to the Committee

If you want to complain to the Committee, you need to follow some rules.

You can find them on our website in a plain English document called New guidelines on how to complain to the Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.

Read the guidelines at:

https://tbinternet.ohchr.org/_layouts/treatybodyexternal/Download.aspx?symbolno=CRPD/C/5/3/REV.1&Lang=en

You must complain in writing or in another format the Committee can use to send a clear copy of the complaint to your country. For example, audio, Easy Read or Braille.

You must send all the information in one of these languages:

- English
- French
- Russian
- Spanish

Give as much detail in your complaint as you can.

If you have more information to give after you have complained, you can send it in later.

5. What happens when the Committee gets a complaint

The Committee will look carefully at each complaint and use the Optional Protocol and the Committee's rules to decide if they can accept it or not.

6. Why the Committee rejects complaints

The Committee rejects a complaint if:

- the person or group lives in a country that ratified the Convention but not the Optional Protocol
- the person complaining doesn't say who they are
- it's written with bad intentions or is about something the Convention doesn't mention
- the Committee, another part of the UN or other organization has looked at the same complaint already or is looking at it now
- there are still ways the country could deal with the complaint first, for example in court, unless this is taking too long or won't make much difference
- it's clearly false or there isn't enough proof to say it's true
- the violation was before the country ratified the Optional Protocol, unless it carried on after they ratified it.

7. If the Committee accepts a complaint

If the Committee accepts a complaint, they will write to the country involved **confidentially** to tell them about it.

8. More information

There is more information about the Convention, the Optional Protocol and the Committee's rules on our website at:

www.ohchr.org/EN/HRBodies/CRPD/Pages/CRPDIndex.aspx

9. Word bank

Word	What it means
Human rights	Rights that everyone has, like the right to education or the right to be treated fairly
Ratify	To formally approve something to make it valid For example, when a country ratifies an agreement, it has to follow its rules
Valid	Official For example, if a rule is valid, people can be made to follow it
Violated	When a rule has been broken or someone's rights have been disrespected
Confidentially	Privately – only between the people who need to know