

From the Office of the Minister



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Jean Ms McCann

Following my statement to the Assembly on the Short Term Aid Scheme on 28 May, you raised the issue of what appeals procedure would be available to applicants for assistance under the Scheme.

Potentially, an appeal could occur at two stages of the application process;

- (i) At the application submission stage, if an application is rejected on eligibility grounds; or
- (ii) At the selection panel approval stage, if the case for support is not approved or a number of the posts that the applicant has requested support for are not approved by the panel for assistance.

Appeals will be handled using Invest NI's existing Client Feedback Procedure.

If a business wishes to appeal a decision at either of these stages of the application process they should in the first instance complete Invest NI's Client Feedback Form and submit it to the Invest NI Customer Service Manager outlining their grounds for appeal. This form is available on request in hard copy format, and also on Invest NI's website: http://www.investni.com/client_feedback_form-2.pdf

The feedback form will be passed to Invest NI's Director of Strategic Management and Planning who will review the decision that was made at the relevant stage in question of the process, and will decide either to uphold the decision or to overturn it and write accordingly to the applicant informing them of that decision.

If the business is still not content with the decision after this appeal they should write to the Chief Executive's Office, again using Invest NI's Client Feedback Procedure, at which stage a further review of the case will be undertaken by Invest NI's Top Management Team (TMT).

If the business remains unhappy with the decision, they can refer their complaint to the Ombudsman (Commissioner for Complaints).

The Client Feedback Procedure is posted on Invest NI's website under the 'Contact us' heading.

I have arranged to copy this letter to the Business Office and the Assembly Library.

I trust this is helpful.

*Yours sincerely,
Arlene Foster*

ARLENE FOSTER MLA
Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment