



[date]

Client Name(s)
Address
Address

Dear (Client Name(s)):

The purpose of this letter

This letter is our first step in reviewing your complaint about [firm name]. It contains important information about our process and some legal information you need to know. Please read it carefully and then call me. I will review it with you, explain our process in more detail, and answer your questions.

Once we have discussed the letter, you will need to sign the consent section at the bottom and return the signed letter to me. That will allow [firm name] to share your personal information with us. We need your signed consent before we can begin our review.

What we do

OBSI provides a dispute-resolution service that is free for consumers and completely independent of the participating financial services firms. Participating firms are required to cooperate with our process, and we work hard to resolve all the complaints we receive fairly and impartially. This means we do not advocate for consumers or participating firms. To succeed, we depend on both you and [firm name] dealing with us promptly and honestly.

Reviewing your complaint

After we receive your agreement, we will ask [firm name] for a copy of its files. We will review them and talk to you about your complaint. It is important that you make yourself available so we can complete our investigation promptly. We will also talk to representatives of the firm. We may share the firm's information with you, and may share your information with the firm.

Once we finish our review, we will share our conclusions with both you and [firm name]. If we conclude it is fair that [firm name] pay you money or take other action, such as fixing a record or issuing a formal apology, we will recommend they do so. We will work with you and [firm name] to reach a resolution.

Both you and [firm name] can accept or reject what we recommend. If [firm name] rejects our recommendation and you and [firm name] cannot agree on another resolution, the details of our investigation will be reported to regulators and published in a news release naming the firm but not you. We are also required to report any systemic issues we find to regulators.

We follow our Terms of Reference when we review a complaint. You can find them on our website (obsi.ca/termsofreference), along with more information about us and what we do.

How we handle your information

We will disclose your personal information only to [firm name] as part of our review process and to others only if the law requires or a regulator requests us to. Sometimes we publish stories about our cases to educate the public, but when we do we remove or change any identifying information to protect consumer and firm privacy.

For more information about our confidentiality and privacy practices, see our Terms of Reference (obsi.ca/termsofreference), and in particular our Privacy Statement (obsi.ca/privacy).

Legal limits on what we can do

We cannot give you legal, financial, or professional advice. Also, we are not a regulator so we cannot discipline your firm or advisor. However, you can take your complaint to a lawyer or regulator at any time, even if we are already investigating your complaint.

If you are considering legal action, there are important things you need to know

1. We usually won't investigate a case that is before the courts

We are an alternative to the court system. If you have started or are planning to start legal action, you agree to let us know.

2. Information you receive from us is confidential

You cannot share the information you get from us with anyone except the firm's regulators and anyone who has also signed this agreement. You cannot use information you get from us in any legal action.

3. There is a time limit for taking legal action

This is known as a limitation period and varies among provinces and territories. We cannot tell you when your limitation period expires or whether it has already expired because this is legal advice. If you are considering legal action now or in the future, we strongly recommend speaking with a lawyer and asking about the time limit.

4. This consent letter temporarily suspends the time limit to take legal action

Signing this letter means the limitation period that applies to your complaint against the firm (but not anyone else) is suspended, to the degree the law allows it. This is sometimes called a “tolling agreement”. It does not reset the start date or begin a new limitation period if it has expired. This suspension of the limitation period is explained in our Terms of Reference (obsi.ca/termsofreference).

The limitation period for your complaint will be suspended:

- From the date we receive this letter signed by you
- Until 30 calendar days after the date of our final recommendation letter to you *or* until the date we have ended our investigation of your complaint, whichever comes first. We will inform you when we have ended our investigation of your complaint.

Next steps

Please call me once you have reviewed this letter. After we speak, please return all pages of this letter, including the signed agreement form, to one of the addresses below within 7 days of our phone conversation.

Fax toll-free: 1-888-422-2865

Scan and email: ombudsman@obsi.ca

Mail: 401 Bay St.
Suite 1505, P.O. Box 5
Toronto, ON M5H 2Y4

We look forward to helping you and [firm name] resolve your complaint.

Yours truly,

[CAO name and contact information]

