

Re: Your financial services firm,

The purpose of this letter

This letter is our first step in reviewing your complaint about your financial services firm. It contains important information about our process and some legal information you need to know. Please read it carefully and then contact us if you have any questions.

After you have reviewed this letter, please sign it and return all pages. We need your signed consent before we can begin our review and ask your financial services firm to share your personal information with us.

What we do

OBSI provides a dispute-resolution service that is free for consumers and completely independent of participating financial services firms. 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 your firm dealing with us promptly and honestly.

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

Reviewing your complaint

After you sign and return this letter, we will ask your firm for a copy of its file. We will review it and the information you have submitted. We may also need to speak to you and/or your firm about your complaint. It is important that you make yourself available if needed so we can complete our investigation promptly.

Our goal is to determine what resolution is fair in all the circumstances. We will share our conclusions with you and your firm. There are a number of possible outcomes of our investigation. We may:

- not recommend your firm compensate you
- recommend that your firm compensate you or reinstate an existing offer, if any; or
- recommend that your firm take action, such as fixing a record or issuing a formal apology.

If we recommend compensation or another action:

- You can accept or reject what we recommend or suggest another resolution. If you reject what we recommend and you and your firm do not agree on another resolution, we will close our file and you may pursue other resolution options.

- Your firm can also accept or reject what we recommend or suggest another resolution. If your firm rejects our recommendation and you and your firm do not agree on another resolution, the details of our investigation will be reported to regulators and published in a news release naming your firm but not you.

Our process is confidential

OBSI's dispute resolution process is confidential. This ensures you and your firm feel comfortable sharing information with us, which will help us efficiently reach a fair outcome. We will share your personal information in accordance with our Privacy Statement (<https://www.obsi.ca/en/about-us/privacy.aspx>).

During our review, we may share information from our investigation with you and your firm. We will not share documents received from you or your firm with the other, except in very limited circumstances.

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. We are also required to report any systemic issues we find to regulators.

For more information about our confidentiality and privacy practices, see our Terms of Reference ([obsi.ca/termsreference](https://www.obsi.ca/termsreference)) and our Privacy Statement (<https://www.obsi.ca/en/about-us/privacy.aspx>).

You cannot share the information you learn from us during our review with anyone except:

- your firm's regulators
- your lawyer; and,
- anyone who also signs this agreement.

This confidentiality obligation applies only to information you learn during our process and does not prevent you from discussing the experiences that led to your complaint.

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 representative. 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 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 your 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/termsreference).

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

If you have any questions about this letter please contact us.

Please sign this letter within 7 days.

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

Agreement

Re: Your complaint about your firm,

I agree to the terms set out here and above. In particular, I agree that:

- My firm can give OBSI information about my file
- OBSI’s correspondence, files, and any discussions we have during the review of my complaint are confidential
- I will not use any correspondence or information from OBSI’s process in legal proceedings
- I will not compel OBSI to disclose its files or records, and I will not require OBSI staff or advisors to give evidence or testify in any legal proceedings
- I will follow OBSI’s Respectful Communication and Behaviour policy (obsi.ca/en/how-we-work/responsibilities-of-firms-and-consumers)
- By providing my personal information to OBSI, I consent to OBSI collecting and using such personal information for the purpose of investigating my complaint about my firm and for the other purposes set out in the OBSI Privacy Statement (<https://www.obsi.ca/en/about-us/privacy/>). For more information about OBSI’s privacy practices, including how OBSI collects and uses your personal information, your privacy rights, and contact information for OBSI’s Privacy Officer, please refer to the OBSI Privacy Statement

I appoint the following representative(s) to help me with my complaint. I authorize OBSI to communicate fully and directly with them about my complaint.

Signed: _____

Date: _____

Authorized Representative Agreement

By signing below, the authorized representative also agrees to the terms and conditions set out in this letter.

Signed: _____

Date: _____