



Members' Service Charter

– an overview of the services, commitment and essential supports provided by your union

Who we are

The INTO is a trade union and professional organisation representing over 50,000 teachers in the Republic of Ireland and Northern Ireland.

Our aim

We aim to provide our members with a professional, efficient and reliable service, and will always endeavour to achieve the highest standards possible. The purpose of the *Members' Service Charter* is to set out the standard of service our members can expect to receive from this organisation.

Services to members

The INTO provides a range of services to members through Head Office, Northern Office and locally elected representatives. All members are entitled to:

- Professional protection in or out of school arising out of, or in the course of, employment as a teacher;
- Advice which is relevant and up-to-date, assistance and support on terms and conditions of employment, legal, industrial relations and professional matters;
- Legal assistance per our conditions governing legal advice and rule 121;
- Indemnity insurance for certain claims not covered by school insurance that might be made for acts arising out of or in the course of their employment;
- An efficient and reliable information service on professional matters through our website and social media platforms;
- A range of grants subject to certain criteria;
- Access to the website and the organisation's information bulletins and publications;
- Access to continuous professional development (CPD) and training events;
- Access to specific group insurance, finance schemes and other specially negotiated membership benefits and services.

Member commitment

In our dealings with members, we will endeavour to ensure that our staff:

- Deliver our services in an inclusive

manner that respects your dignity;

- Ensure the rights of equal treatment established by equality legislation are upheld;
- Treat you with courtesy and professionalism;
- Have the relevant knowledge, experience, responsibility and authority to provide you with reliable and accurate information in a clear manner, or refer you to someone who can;
- Deal with your requests, queries and concerns as efficiently as possible and to the best of our ability;
- Cuir séirbhís ar fáil as Gaeilge nuair is feidir linn;
- Protect your information and adhere to confidentiality requirements in accordance with our data privacy policy;
- Commit to regularly exploring new and better ways of delivering our service.

Central Executive and Northern Committee

Our service is complemented by our Central Executive Committee (CEC) and Northern Committee (NC) representatives who are available to offer support and advice. You will find contact details for your local representative in the INTO diary and on the website. Please be aware that committee members are full-time teachers and should be contacted outside school times where possible.

Service targets

- The Irish National Teachers' Organisation provides a comprehensive and wide-ranging information and advice service to its members. Sources of information include the website, *InTouch*, e-newsletters, FAQs and our communication platforms. We provide up-to-date and relevant CPD for members.
- Your first port of call for information on our services should be to our website www.into.ie, where we provide you with relevant, up-to-date and easily accessible information. We commit to updating the website when new information becomes available.
- Our Queryline service can be accessed via the online members portal (www.into.ie/login), email and telephone. Our service target is to respond to your query within a reasonable timeframe but no longer than three working days. There may be circumstances beyond our control which can cause a longer response time.

- Our structures provide for consultation with members. We commit to maintaining structures that are equitable, inclusive, participatory, transparent, accountable and democratic.

Your role and responsibilities

For us to help you we expect you to:

- Provide us with the relevant information we need to help you;
- Treat our staff with respect.

We will not tolerate abusive, offensive or threatening behaviour or that which, due to the frequency of contact, accounts for a disproportionate amount of time and resources. We have a right to end any communications if the caller is considered aggressive, abusive, offensive, excessively argumentative or confrontational. The team member taking the call will inform the caller that their behaviour is unacceptable and that the call will be terminated if the behaviour continues.

This also applies to communications via our social media platforms. Please see our *Social Media Community Guidelines*.

Members' complaints

We acknowledge that despite our best efforts, there may be times when we don't achieve the service that you expect. In such circumstances, members have a right to make a complaint to us. This process is outlined in the *INTO Members' Complaints Process* (below).

INTO Members' Complaints Process

Introduction

We aim to provide our members with a professional, efficient and reliable service, and will always endeavour to achieve the highest standards possible. We acknowledge that despite our best efforts, there may be times when we don't achieve the service that you expect. In such circumstances, members have a right to make a complaint to us. Your complaint should be made promptly. The process for making a complaint is outlined below.

How to make a complaint: Informal

As is the norm in dispute resolution mechanisms, there is an informal stage for raising issues and concerns regarding our services and/or the quality and level of service you have received. We ask that you raise this with the team member you have been dealing with in the first instance to seek a resolution. Should a resolution not be possible, the opportunity will be provided to engage with a more senior team member. You can request the contact details from the relevant team member with whom you have been engaging. Again, the aim will be to resolve the matter.

How to make a complaint: Formal

Should your complaint remain unresolved after the informal stage you should put your complaint in writing to the Assistant General Secretary of the relevant section in Head Office or the Assistant Northern Secretary in the Northern Office. You should provide enough information to help us understand the circumstances of your

complaint. It will assist us in dealing with your complaint if you give us the following information:

- Your name, date of birth and/or payroll/teacher reference number (TRN);
- A daytime telephone number, if you would be happy for us to contact you by phone – this may help resolve the matter more quickly;
- The name of the team member involved;
- The date(s) on which your engagement with us occurred;
- Details of exactly how the service did not meet your expectations; and
- Any relevant documentation/ correspondence etc.

The assistant general secretary/assistant northern secretary may contact you via telephone to discuss your complaint to establish the facts. During this engagement, you will be treated fairly, with courtesy and without bias. We aim to reply within a reasonable timeframe but no later than 15 working days. More complex complaints may require a longer timeframe. Should this be the case we will consult with you about the timeframe. The Assistant General Secretary/Assistant Northern Secretary will seek to resolve your complaint and will inform you in writing of the outcome. If your complaint is upheld, we will consider the appropriate remedy.

Please note the following:

- If the Assistant General Secretary or Northern Secretary is the subject of your complaint, you should write directly to the Deputy General Secretary.

- If your complaint is about the Assistant Northern Secretary you should put your complaint in writing to the Northern Secretary.
- Complaints about the Deputy General Secretary or the General Secretary are dealt with through a separate process and should be addressed to the President.

Appeal

If you are dissatisfied with the outcome following the formal process, you should notify the General Secretary that you wish to appeal this decision within ten working days of receipt of the outcome of your complaint.

The following details should be set out:

- Your name, date of birth and/or payroll/teacher reference number;
- A daytime telephone number;
- Include any relevant documentation/ correspondence etc.;
- The reasons why you remain dissatisfied with the outcome of the formal stage.

Upon receipt of your appeal, the General Secretary will consider the matter. The General Secretary will inform you of the outcome within a reasonable timeframe but no later than 15 working days. More complex complaints may require a longer timeframe. Should this be the case the General Secretary will consult with you about the timeframe. The decision of the General Secretary shall be final.

Contact details for making a formal complaint or appealing a decision may be requested from Head Office/ Northern Office.

REVIEW: The *INTO Members' Service Charter* and *Members' Complaints Process* will be subject to regular review. English and Irish versions of these policies will be available in the members' portal on our website.