

Office of the Ombudsman Annual Report 2024



Who we are

The Office of the Ombudsman is independent of Canada Post staff and management and reports directly to the Chair of the Board of Directors.

It gives Canadians another avenue if they feel Canada Post did not live up to its service commitments.

We get involved when Canada Post's own processes have not resolved the issue, and we are the final appeal authority when a disappointed customer seeks redress beyond Canada Post's complaint resolution process. We investigate customer complaints, seek clarification, confirm the facts, and recommend fair and equitable solutions.

We also complement Canada Post's continuing commitment to quality and customer experience. By identifying trends, focusing on prevention, and recommending changes where warranted, we provide Canada Post with another perspective to improve service. We see every case as a learning opportunity for the Corporation to identify preventative or mitigating measures. This feedback loop is an integral element of our day-to-day work—and of our value to Canadians.

How we operate

We promptly acknowledge and review customers' appeals, and communicate our next steps within five business days. The complexity and severity of the issue then determine how quickly we are able to investigate an appeal. The process works this way:



1

Submission
of an appeal online at canadapost.ca/ombudsman.



2

Triage
based on severity and impact.



3

Investigation
with corporate and local management (and third parties as required), and mediation.



4

Feedback
to customer, local management, and senior executives.



5

Follow-up
as required, to ensure solutions are sustained.



Highlights of 2024

In 2024, the total number of appeals received by our office decreased by 15 per cent compared to the previous year. However, the number of complaints that were investigated went up by 2 per cent over 2023.

We received a total of 4,229 appeals in 2024 compared to 4,960 in 2023.

We attribute this decrease in the total number of appeals received to three factors:

1. A four-week Canada Post labour disruption that started in November and resulted in a suspension of mail delivery for the duration.
2. Mail volume eroded during the period preceding the labour disruption as customers moved their mail to other delivery companies to ensure certainty for their shipments over the holiday season.
3. We completed three internal initiatives meant to redirect customers to the right channel before reaching out to the ombudsman office.

We executed in-depth investigations on 2,420 appeals compared to 2,374 in 2023. This is a small increase this year. Two complaint categories represented 43 per cent of all investigations completed:

- Mail went missing or was lost.
- Customer deemed the compensation offered by Canada Post unfair.

Compared to the previous year, 2024 saw small increases in complaints about damaged mail, lost or missing mail, issues with return-to-sender items, mail delivered to the wrong address, requests for a change in mode of delivery, and the behaviour of Customer Service agents.

During and preceding the labour disruption, we were satisfied with the level of proactive communications with commercial customers and the general marketplace by Canada Post to signal the status of negotiations.

Following the labour disruption, we handled several appeals from customers who were requesting varying levels of compensation because their parcels or direct mail campaigns were delayed when delivery was suspended.

Slightly less than half the appeals received did not result in an in-depth investigation because customers withdrew their submissions before our investigation concluded, or did not provide the necessary information and documents during the investigation, or reached out to us before Canada Post had the opportunity to fully address their complaints.

The number of appeals related to the *Canadian Postal Service Charter* decreased by 20 per cent compared to the previous year. The top reported issues were missing or damaged items and difficulty reaching Customer Service. Together, they represented 81 per cent of all appeals relating to the Charter.

We remain committed to working with all customers to ensure the appeal process is fair, unbiased, and confidential.

Key statistics



Appeals received:
4,229
(15% decrease)



In-depth investigations:
2,420
(2% increase)



Investigations resulting in
Canada Post's remediation:
589
(24% of all investigations)

Top appeals



Missing or lost item:
564
(10% increase)



Compensation deemed
unfair:
474
(8% decrease)



Damaged mail:
164
(17% increase)

Leading types of appeals submitted in 2024

- The customer's parcel went missing or the content was damaged during delivery.
- The customer felt Canada Post's indemnity offer in a claims dispute was unreasonable.
- The customer was unhappy with their experience in interacting with Canada Post staff (at a retail counter or with a delivery agent or Customer Service agent).
- The customer's parcel arrived late.
- The Mail Forwarding service did not work as expected.
- The customer reported issues when an item was returned to sender.
- Mail was delivered to the wrong address.
- The customer was unhappy with their assigned mode of delivery.
- Mail was caught in the network during the labour disruption and the compensation offered was deemed unfair by the customer.

A few recommendations to help you avoid postal issues

1. If you're mailing at a post office, ask about the available features and options, including liability coverage for loss or damage, and signature at delivery. Consider choosing these options when shipping valuable items.
2. Know who you are dealing with when you buy goods online. Canada Post cannot assume liability for fraud by a shipper or receiver.
3. To avoid being defrauded, do not send funds using Canada Post services to someone you do not know.
4. Use proper packaging. Only you know the physical characteristics of your item and how to secure it as it goes through processing equipment.
5. Apply an accurate address label to your shipment. This must include a valid mailing address, not just a person's name. If the mailing address is incomplete or incorrect, Canada Post will not speculate on where to deliver the item.
6. Canada Post's Mail Forwarding and Hold Mail services are for letter mail, not parcels. If you order online or are expecting a parcel, provide the sender your new address.



Some common requests that we cannot help with

1. Intercepting an item in Canada Post's network before delivery. This is extremely difficult and is illegal without proper authorization.
2. Changing the destination address of an item after it is mailed.
3. Settling a claim for loss or damage with the receiver rather than the sender, who is the party contracted with Canada Post to deliver the item.
4. Setting corporate policies, such as product specifications or pricing, or recommending disciplinary action that involves Canada Post's relationships with employees, contractors, or suppliers.

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