

Appealing a Parking Charge Notice

If you have received a Parking Charge Notice from a private parking operator, you may be able to appeal it.

Parking Charge Notices are issued by private car parking companies if you have breached the terms and conditions of a private car park. A parking charge notice is different to a parking ticket or Penalty Charge Notice issued by a local authority. If you have received one of these, visit the [NI Direct website for what to do next](#).

From 1 April 2024, all Council owned car parks in Northern Ireland will now be managed by a private parking operator instead of the Department for Infrastructure (DfI). The main change for consumers is that the parking enforcement officers will now wear blue uniforms, however, the responsibilities and legal authority that the attendants have will remain the same and any Penalty Charge Notices (PCNs) issued will be valid and must be paid or appealed by following the instructions on the letter or notification received.

Use our interactive tool below to find out what your options are if you have received a Parking Charge Notice.

What to do if you have received a PCN

Which best describes your situation?

- I have received a PCN and I don't know what to do. What do I do next?
- I have received a PCN and have already appealed it.

Which of the following best describes your situation?

- I am the registered keeper of the vehicle, not the driver
- I was driving the vehicle
- I shouldn't have received the Parking Charge Notice
- I'm an employee/contractor who works on a private parking site
- The only correspondence I have received is a debt recovery agency letter

You can appeal

You can appeal a PCN if you are the registered keeper of the vehicle but you weren't driving it when the PCN was issued. This is because the Protection of Freedoms Act (PoFA) does not apply in Northern Ireland, unlike England and Wales.

As the registered keeper of the vehicle, you can appeal the PCN by asking the parking operator to provide evidence that you were driving on the date of the alleged breach, if no evidence exists, the PCN can be cancelled.

How to appeal

You can appeal the PCN online, by email or by letter. If sending a letter or email, use our template.

[Download the template letter](#)

Details of where to send the appeal to will be on the letter you received, or you can [find contact details for the parking operator here](#).

If the parking operator has sufficient evidence to prove that the registered keeper was driving the vehicle at the time of issue, they can still uphold the PCN, even if you appeal.

The parking operator has up to 28 working days to issue a response to your appeal.

Our tips and advice on appealing:

- Only provide the minimum information needed to appeal the PCN, don't include your telephone number, or any other information. You only need to provide your email address if you're appealing online or by email. When providing your personal details, copy the information exactly as it is detailed on the PCN letter.
- If you are appealing the PCN via post, include your PCN number and vehicle registration.

How we can help

The Consumer Council cannot directly appeal PCNs on behalf of all consumers, we can only assist those who are vulnerable or have mitigating circumstances that led to the PCN being issued, such as blue badge holders who receive a PCN, or PCNs issued due to camera faults.

If you are vulnerable or have received a PCN under mitigating circumstances like the examples given, we may be able to assist you with your appeal. Call us on 0800 121 6022 or email us to contact@consumercouncil.org.uk

You can appeal

If you were driving the vehicle, you can appeal with PCN if you believe you received it incorrectly.

You may have received the PCN incorrectly, if:

- There were no signs in the car park explaining the parking rules, or the signs were damaged, broken or hard to read
- There was an error with the car park's cameras
- You received a PCN for parking in a disabled bay, despite having a valid blue badge
- You had a valid reason for being in the car park longer than permitted, such as a queue exiting the carpark, your car breaks down or a medical emergency
- You have paid for your parking but made a mistake when entering your car registration.

You can appeal the PCN online, by email or by letter.

Details of where to send the appeal to will be on the letter you received, or you can [find contact details for the parking operator here](#).

Collect as much evidence as possible to support your appeal, such as photographs of damaged signs.

Our tips and advice for making an appeal:

In your complaint, mention the Code of Practice and highlight the specific parts of the Code that have been breached. The Code of Practice states that:

- Parking operators must display clear and legible signage that provides the terms and conditions of the carpark.
- Automatic Number Plate Recognition (ANPR) cameras must be working and maintained.

To find out which trade association your parking operator is a member of, just use the links below. The Code of Practice for each of the trade associations will be available on their website.

- [British Parking Association's Approved Operators](#)
- [International Parking Community](#)

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The Consumer Council cannot directly appeal PCNs on behalf of all consumers, we can only assist those who are vulnerable or have mitigating circumstances that led to the PCN being issued, such as blue badge holders who receive a PCN, or PCNs issued due to camera faults.

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You can appeal

If you're an employee at a location that has a privately managed car park or you are a contractor who was working on site, you should check with your employer if they have an agreement in place with the parking operator that permits staff to use the parking facilities without receiving a PCN. If an exemption agreement is in place, get your car registration added to avoid future PCNs being issued.

If you're already on the exemption list and still receive a PCN, let your employer know and they should be able to appeal the PCN on your behalf.

If no exemption agreement is in place, then you should consider appealing the PCN yourself if you believe that the PCN has been issued incorrectly.

You may have received the PCN incorrectly, if:

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- You received a PCN for parking in a disabled bay, despite having a valid blue badge
- You had a valid reason for being in the car park longer than permitted, such as a queue exiting the carpark, your car breaks down or a medical emergency
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Details of where to send the appeal to will be on the letter you received, or you can [find contact details for the parking operator here](#).

Collect as much evidence as possible to support your appeal, such as photographs of damaged signs.

Our tips and advice for making an appeal:

In your complaint, mention the Code of Practice and highlight the specific parts of the Code that have been breached. The Code of Practice states that:

- Parking operators must display clear and legible signage that provides the terms and conditions of the carpark.
- Automatic Number Plate Recognition (ANPR) cameras must be working and maintained.

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If you are vulnerable or have received a PCN under mitigating circumstances like the examples given, we may be able to assist you with your appeal. Call us on 0800 121 6022 or email us to contact@consumercouncil.org.uk.

You can complain

Unpaid PCNs are passed to debit recovery agencies. You should receive two “Notice to Keeper” letters directly from the Parking Operator before they pass it to a debt recovery agency. If you don’t receive these letters, the Parking Operator could be in breach of its trade association’s Code of Practice. This means that you’ll be able to make a formal complaint against them.

Follow these steps to make a complaint.

1. Make a complaint to the Parking Operator. Instructions on how to do this will be on their website, or you can [contact them directly for information](#).
2. If you don’t receive a response or are unhappy with the response, you can escalate the complaint to the Parking Operator’s Trade Association. They will then investigate the issue in more detail.

Our tips and advice for making a complaint to the parking operator:

In your complaint, mention the Code of Practice and highlight the specific parts of the Code that have been breached. The Code of Practice states that:

- You should be offered the chance to pay the PCN at a reduced rate before it is passed to a debt recovery agency
- You should be given the opportunity to appeal the PCN within 28 days of receiving it, before it is passed to a debt recovery agency

To find out which trade association your parking operator is a member of, just use the links below. The Code of Practice for each of the trade associations will be available on their website.

- [British Parking Association's Approved Operators](#)

- [International Parking Community](#)

Are you prepared to pay the Parking Charge Notice? _____

- Yes
- No

Details of how to pay the PCN will be available on the letter you receive.

Here are our tips on [how to avoid getting another PCN in the future](#).

You can appeal

If you were driving the vehicle, you can appeal the PCN if you believe you received it incorrectly.

You may have received the PCN incorrectly, if:

- There were no signs in the car park explaining the parking rules, or the signs were damaged, broken or hard to read
- There was an error with the car park's cameras
- You received a PCN for parking in a disabled bay, despite having a valid blue badge
- You had a valid reason for being in the car park longer than permitted, such as a queue exiting the carpark, your car breaks down or a medical emergency
- You have paid for your parking but made a mistake when entering your car registration.

You can appeal the PCN online, by email or by letter.

Details of where to send the appeal to will be on the letter you received, or you can [find contact details for the parking operator here](#).

Collect as much evidence as possible to support your appeal, such as photographs of damaged signs.

Our tips and advice for making an appeal:

In your complaint, mention the Code of Practice and highlight the specific parts of the Code that have been breached. The Code of Practice states that:

- Parking operators must display clear and legible signage that provides the terms and conditions of the carpark.
- Automatic Number Plate Recognition (ANPR) cameras must be working and maintained.

To find out which trade association your parking operator is a member of, just use the links below. The Code of Practice for each of the trade associations will be available on their website.

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- [International Parking Community](#)

If you ignore the PCN, the following may happen:

- **Increased cost:**
The PCN will increase to £170 and eventually be passed to a debt recovery agency. The debt agency will then contact you by letter.
- **Small Claims Court:**
The parking operator may take the case to the Small Claims Court.
- **Clamping:**
Your vehicle may be clamped.

How we can help

The Consumer Council cannot directly appeal PCNs on behalf of all consumers, we can only assist those who are vulnerable or have mitigating circumstances that led to the PCN being issued, such as blue badge holders who receive a PCN, or PCNs issued due to camera faults.

If you are vulnerable or have received a PCN under mitigating circumstances like the examples given, we may be able to assist you with your appeal. Call us on 0800 121 6022 or email us to contact@consumercouncil.org.uk.

Which of the following best describes your situation?

- You have appealed the PCN and your appeal was rejected
- You have already appealed the PCN but not received a response

You have appealed the PCN and your appeal was rejected

You can:

Escalate your appeal

If your appeal has been rejected, you can escalate it to a higher authority depending on which trade association the operator has membership with. Operators with membership to the British Parking Association (BPA) accept escalated appeals via the Parking on Private Land Appeals (POPLA) service and operators with membership to the International Parking Community (IPC) accept escalated appeals via the Independent Appeals Service (IAS) .

If you wish to escalate your appeal this must be submitted to the appeals body within 28 days of your appeal being rejected if appealing to POPLA and 21 days if appealing to the IAS. Follow the guidance on the appeals service website for information on how to submit your appeal.

- [POPLA's website](#)
- [Independent Appeal Service](#)

Pay the PCN

You can pay the PCN by following the instructions on the letter you received.

Ignore the PCN

If you ignore the PCN, the following may happen:

- **Increased cost:**
The PCN will increase to £170 and eventually be passed to a debt recovery agency. The debt agency will then contact you by letter.
- **Small Claims Court:**
The parking operator may take the case to the Small Claims Court.
- **Clamping:**
Your vehicle may be clamped.

You have already appealed the PCN but not received a response

The parking operator has 28 working days to respond to your appeal and during this time a hold should be placed on your PCN.

If 28 working days has passed and you haven't received a response, the Parking Operator could be in breach of its trade association's Code of Practice. This means that you'll be able to make a formal complaint against them.

Follow these steps to make a complaint.

1. Make a complaint to the Parking Operator. Instructions on how to do this will be on their website, or you can [contact them directly for information](#).
2. If you don't receive a response or are unhappy with the response, you can escalate the complaint to the Parking Operator's Trade Association. They will then investigate the issue in more detail.

Our tips and advice for making a complaint to the parking operator:

1. In your complaint, mention the Code of Practice and highlight the specific parts of the Code that have been breached. The Code of Practice states that:
 - You should receive a response to an appeal within 28 working days
 - A hold should be placed on the PCN during the appeal period
2. In your complaint, tell them when you made your appeal and provide any correspondence that you received from the parking operator.

To find out which trade association your parking operator is a member of, just use the links below. The Code of Practice for each of the trade associations will be available on their website.

- [British Parking Association's Approved Operators](#)
- [International Parking Community](#)

Start again

Contact details for Private Parking Operators

Smart Parking

Appeal by post by sending a letter to:

Smart Parking Limited
Unit 43, Elmdon Trading Estate,
Bickenhill Lane,
Birmingham, B37 7HE

Appeal online by visiting the [Smart Parking website.](#)

Civil Enforcement Limited (CEL)

Appeal by post by sending a letter to:

Civil Enforcement Limited
Horton House, Exchange Flags,
Liverpool, L2 3PF

Appeal online by visiting the [Civil Enforcement Limited website.](#)

Horizon Parking

Appeal by post by sending a letter to:

Horizon Parking Ltd

Finitor House,

2 Hanbury Road,

Chelmsford, CM1 3AE

Appeal online by [visiting the Horizon Parking website.](#)

Euro Car Parks

Appeal by post by sending a letter to:

Euro Car Parks

30 Dorset Square

London

NW1 6QJ

Appeal online by visiting [Euro Car Parks website.](#)

APCOA

Appeal by post by sending a letter to:

APCOA PARKING (UK) LTD

Wellington House

4-10 Cowley Road

Uxbridge

UB8 2XW

Appeal online by [visiting APCOA's website.](#)

Park Maven

Appeal by post by sending a letter to:

Park Maven

Kemp House 160,

City Road,

London, EC1V 2NX

Appeal online by visiting [Park Maven's website.](#)

Car Park Services

Appeal by post by sending a letter to:

Car Park Services

36 Great Patrick St,

Belfast, BT1 2LT

Appeal online by visiting [Car Park Services.](#)



How to avoid getting a Parking Charge Notice

Follow our tips and advice on how to avoid getting a Parking Charge Notice when you are out and about.

[Avoid getting a PCN](#)