

Salient Features: The Reserve Bank – Integrated Ombudsman Scheme, 2026

The Reserve Bank– Integrated Ombudsman Scheme (RB-IOS), 2026, aims to provide a cost-effective, expeditious, non-adversarial alternate grievance redress mechanism for the resolution of complaints against Regulated Entities covered under the Scheme.

The Integrated Ombudsman Scheme, 2026 is effective from July 1, 2026. Following are the salient features of the Scheme:

- 1.** Complaint means a representation in writing, alleging a deficiency in service on the part of bank, submitted by its customer or his/her authorised representative, and seeking relief under the provisions of the Scheme;
- 2.** There is no limit on the amount in a dispute that can be brought before the Ombudsman for which the Ombudsman can pass an Award. However, for any consequential loss suffered by the complainant, the Ombudsman shall have the power to provide compensation up to Rupees 30 lakh, in addition to, up to Rupees 03 lakh for the loss of the complainant's time, expenses incurred and for harassment/mental anguish suffered by the complainant
- 3.** The complainant can lodge a complaint to RBI Ombudsman in three ways:
 - a) The complaint can be lodged online through the RBI CMS portal (<https://cms.rbi.org.in>)
 - b) Email id: crpc@rbi.org.in
 - c) The complaint may also be submitted through electronic or physical mode to the Centralised Receipt and Processing Centre, Chandigarh at the given address: Centralised Receipt and Processing Centre (CRPC), 4th floor, Reserve Bank of India Central Vista, Sector 17, Chandigarh – 160017

Additionally, The Contact Center with Interactive Voice Response System (IVRS) with Toll Free #14448 is available 24x7 for Complainants to know about the Scheme and the process of complaint lodging. The facility to connect to Contact Center personnel is available from Monday to Saturday except for National Holidays, between 8:00AM to 10:00PM for English, Hindi and ten regional languages.

4. Grounds for maintainability of a Complaint

- (1)** A complaint under the Scheme shall be maintainable only if the following conditions are satisfied:
- a. the complaint is addressed to the RBI Ombudsman directly. However, it does not include a communication in which the Reserve Bank is merely endorsed/marked in copy (whether by e-mail or in physical form); and
 - b. the complaint is lodged by the Complainant personally or through an authorised representative other than an advocate unless the advocate is the aggrieved person; and
 - c. the Complainant provides complete information as specified in clause 11 of the Scheme; and
 - d. the complaint is not abusive or frivolous or vexatious in nature; and
 - e. the Complainant had first made a complaint in writing or through any other mode to the Bank, where proof of having made a complaint can be produced by the Complainant, before making a complaint under the Scheme; and
 - f. the Complainant has not received any reply within 30 days or within the time specified by the Reserve Bank, National Payments Corporation of India, or under Card Network guidelines, if any, whichever is higher after the Bank received the complaint; or the Complainant is not satisfied with the reply / resolution provided by the Bank; and
 - g. the complaint is made to the RBI Ombudsman within 90 days from the date on which the timeline

- specified in sub-clause (1)(f) expires or the date of the last communication from the Bank, whichever is later; and
- h. the complaint is not relating to the same grievance, which is already pending before the Office of the RBI Ombudsman, whether or not received from the same Complainant or along with one or more Complainants; or
 - i. the complaint is not relating to the same grievance, which is already settled or dealt with on merits, by the Office of the RBI Ombudsman, whether or not received from the same Complainant or along with one or more Complainants; and
 - j. the complaint is not relating to the same grievance, which is already pending before any Court, Tribunal or Arbitrator or any other judicial or quasi-judicial forum, whether or not received from the same Complainant or along with one or more of the Complainants; or
 - k. the complaint is not relating to the same grievance, which is already settled or dealt with on merits, by any Court, Tribunal or Arbitrator or any other judicial or quasi-judicial forum, whether or not received from the same Complainant or along with one or more of the Complainants; and
 - l. the complaint to the Bank was made before the expiry of the period of limitation prescribed under the Limitation Act, 1963, for such claims.

Explanation 1: For the purposes of sub-clause (1)(j) and (1)(k), a complaint relating to the same grievance does not include criminal proceedings pending or decided before a Court or Tribunal or any police investigation initiated in a criminal offence.

(2) The complaints involving the following matters are excluded from the purview of the Scheme:

- a. matters related to commercial judgment or decision of the Bank;
- b. a dispute between a vendor and Bank;
- c. grievances against Management or Executives of the Bank;
- d. a grievance arising from an action of Bank in compliance with the orders of a judicial/quasi-judicial or statutory or law enforcing authority;
- e. a service not within the regulatory purview of the Reserve Bank;
- f. a dispute between Regulated Entities;
- g. a dispute involving the employee-employer relationship of the Bank;
- h. a grievance for which a remedy has been provided in Section 18 of the Credit Information Companies (Regulation) Act, 2005; and
- i. a grievance pertaining to customers of Bank not included under the Scheme.

(3) Complaints not meeting the eligibility conditions as specified under sub-clause (1) and complaints that are mentioned in sub-clause (2) shall be rejected at the outset as non-maintainable without further examination, with appropriate communication to the Complainant.

- 5.** The Bank on receipt of the complaint, should furnish written reply along with all the relevant documents to the Ombudsman within 15 days of receipt of complaint. Provided that the Ombudsman, at the request of the Bank in writing to the satisfaction of the Ombudsman, grant such further time as may be deemed fit to file its written version and documents.
- 6.** In case, the Bank omits /fails to file its written version and documents within 15 days, then Ombudsman may proceed ex-parte based on the evidence available on record and pass appropriate Order or issue an Award.
- 7.** The RBI Ombudsman or RBI Deputy Ombudsman, as the case may be, shall endeavour to facilitate a settlement

of a complaint by agreement between the Complainant and the Bank. In the course of such proceedings, the parties to the complaint shall comply with the advisory issued by the Office of the RBI Ombudsman for submission of relevant documents or material within the stipulated time.

- 8.** For the purpose of promoting a settlement of the complaint, the RBI Ombudsman or RBI Deputy Ombudsman, as the case may be, shall ensure that the written response or supporting documents or material filed by one party, to the extent relevant and pertaining to the complaint, are furnished to other party and follow such procedure and provide additional time as may be considered appropriate.
- 9.** The RBI Ombudsman may, if deemed necessary and based on the circumstances of the complaint, issue an advisory to the Bank at any stage to take such action as may lead to full or partial resolution and settlement of the complaint, and
 - a. if the Bank takes action and complies with the advisory within the stipulated time and the Complainant accepts the same, the complaint shall be closed under Clause 14(8)(b);
 - b. in the event the Complainant does not respond within the stipulated time or raises any objection that is found to be without merit, the complaint shall be closed under Clause 14(8)(a) or Clause 14(8)(d), respectively.
- 10.** Where the RBI Ombudsman / RBI Deputy Ombudsman is of the opinion that the documents / material furnished and written submissions by both the parties are not conclusive enough to arrive at a settlement, a conciliation meeting of the Complainant with the officials of Bank may be initiated by the RBI Ombudsman or RBI Deputy Ombudsman, if considered necessary. If such meeting is held and it results in a mutually acceptable settlement of the grievance, the proceedings of the meeting shall be recorded and signed by the parties stating that they are agreeable to the settlement.

Provided that such meeting shall be held in the presence of the RBI Ombudsman, and the parties in person or online.
- 11.** The Bank will not have any right to appeal in case the Bank omits or fails to file its written version and documents within the time as provided in terms of Clause 15(1)(a) of the Integrated Ombudsman Scheme.
- 12.** The Award shall lapse and be of no effect unless the complainant furnishes a letter of acceptance of the Award in full and final settlement of the claim to the Bank, within a period of 30 days from the date of receipt of the copy of the Award.
- 13.** The complainant aggrieved by an Award or rejection of a complaint by Ombudsman Office may prefer an Appeal before the Appellate Authority within 30 days of the date of receipt of the Award or rejection of the complaint
- 14.** The Appellate Authority may, if it is satisfied that the complainant had sufficient cause for not making the appeal within the time, may allow a further period not exceeding 30 days.

For more details, a copy of the Scheme is available at the branch, on the Bank's website (www.idfcfirst.bank.in) and on the RBI website (www.rbi.org.in)