

# Complaints about the Conduct of Judicial Office Holders - Code of Practice issued by the Lady Chief Justice of Northern Ireland.

## STATISTICAL RETURN FOR 2023

Statutory responsibility for complaints against members of the judiciary as well as Presidents and members of the tribunals rests with the **Lord Chief Justice who in 2006 published a Code of Practice setting out arrangements for investigating complaints identified in the Code.**

Court users and the public generally are entitled to expect holders of judicial office to maintain high standards of personal conduct. While the Chief Justice is confident that courts and tribunal judiciary have demonstrated such standards in the past and will continue to do so, the Code provides for comprehensive procedures to address any serious or substantive complaints received and to do so within timescales set out in the Code.

It is important to emphasise that the Code applies only to judicial conduct and not to judicial decisions, the process of reasoning underpinning such decisions and the exercise of judicial functions generally. Such matters may only be challenged through the legal processes available.

1. Table A below provides information by judicial tier of judicial complaints received by the Chief Justice for the 2023 reporting period together with 3 previous years for comparative purposes.

**Table A**

Judicial Tier	2023	2022	2021	2020
C/O from previous year	0	4	6	-
High Court	6	8	7	9
County Court	6	14	3	5
District Judge (Civil)	3	2	1	3
District Judge Magistrates' Courts	25	35	15	15
Statutory Officers and Others	2	7	10	2

Others	10	12	1	6
<b>Total</b>	<b>52</b>	<b>82</b>	<b>43</b>	<b>40</b>

### Breakdown of complaints Received

2. Table B below summarises the final outcome of the 52 judicial complaints considered in 2023. Of the 52 complaints, 9 were investigated with (1 upheld, 6 not upheld and 2 complaints investigations were ongoing and carried over into 2024. 2 complaints were either withdrawn or did not proceed. The remaining 41 complaints were outside of the remit of the judicial Code of Practice.)

**Table B**

<b>Outcome</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>(%)</b>
Beyond remit	41	79
Withdrawn/did not proceed	2	4
Not upheld	6	11
Upheld in part	-	0
Upheld	1	2
<b>C/Forward to 2024</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>4</b>

3. Table C below provides comparable information regarding complaints received during 2023 about the conduct of members of Tribunals and determined by Tribunal Presidents on behalf of the Lady Chief Justice.



**LADY CHIEF JUSTICE'S Office**

**February 2024**