

Frequently Asked Questions

Upcoming Change:

Single External Complaints Body (ECB) Effective November 1, 2024

General Questions about the upcoming change		
1	What is ADRBO	ADR Chambers Banking Ombuds Office (ADRBO) is a government-approved ECB that has been providing services to Canadian bank consumers since 2009. ADRBO provides these services to five Canadian banks and their consumers. They have extensive information on their website at www.bankingombuds.ca .
2	What is OBSI?	The Ombudsman for Banking Services and Investment (OBSI) is a government-approved ECB that provides financial dispute resolution services to over 1500 participating financial services firms and their consumers. OBSI has been providing services to Canadian bank consumers since 1996 and serves over 120 Canadian banks and credit unions and their consumers. They have extensive information on their website www.obsi.ca
3	What is changing?	<p>On November 1, 2024, consumers of all Canadian banks will be able to escalate any complaints that they have not been able to resolve with their bank to OBSI for an independent investigation and resolution.</p> <p>This is a change from the current system in which there are two banking ECBs – OBSI and ADRBO.</p>
4	When is this change happening?	<p>ADRBO has the mandate to review complaints where the ADRBO Consent Letter is received by them from the consumer by 11:59 pm EDT on October 31, 2024. OBSI has the mandate to review complaints where the OBSI Consent Letter is received by them from the consumer on or after November 1, 2024.</p> <p>The Consent Letter is a standard document that consumers sign to allow an ECB to begin investigating their complaint. In this letter, the consumer gives their permission for the ECB to exchange information about them and their complaint with the bank involved and ensures that the consumer using the service has important information about the ECB process.</p>
5	Why is this change happening?	In 2022, the Canadian government announced that Canada would be moving from a multiple-ECB system to a single-ECB system for

		banking complaints. In early 2023, the Financial Consumer Agency of Canada (FCAC) conducted an open and transparent application process to identify the single ECB. In October 2023, the federal government announced the designation of OBSI to be the sole ECB for Canadian banks effective November 1, 2024.
6	Why did the government make this decision?	The move to a single ECB addresses findings from FCAC’s 2020 report on the Operations of External Complaints Bodies Industry Review: The Operations of External Complaints Bodies - Canada.ca
7	Who is impacted by this change	TD along with select other Canadian banks currently use ADRBO as their ECB. Consumers of these banks will have the ability to escalate their complaints to ADRBO until October 31, 2024 and to OBSI beginning on November 1, 2024.
8	What is the role of FCAC in this change?	FCAC has worked with OBSI, ADRBO, and all transitioning banks to develop an operational transition plan for all impacted stakeholders. This plan ensures that the transition will proceed in an orderly way and has three key objectives: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. That OBSI will be fully operational and capable of managing the intake and investigation of all escalated complaints of all Canadian banks within the timeframes established in the Bank Act. 2. That all Canadian banks have appropriate systems and communications in place to support their consumers’ ability to escalate to OBSI. 3. That consumers who escalate complaints during the transition period are treated fairly. FCAC is also working individually with each organization to ensure appropriate preparation for the transition.
Questions specifically about escalating your complaint		
9	When and how can I escalate my complaint to an ECB?	You can escalate your complaint to an ECB for an independent review right away if you have a final response letter from your bank or if 56 days have passed since you complained to your bank. You have up to 180 days from the date you received the final response letter from your bank to escalate your complaint. If you escalate your complaint before November 1, 2024, you can only escalate it to ADRBO. If you escalate your complaint on or after November 1, 2024, you can only escalate it to OBSI. OBSI will open any complaint that is within its mandate that is escalated to

		it on or after November 1, 2024 unless the consumer has already escalated their complaint to ADRBO and signed the ADRBO Consent Letter.
10	How do I ensure ADRBO can take my complaint?	ADRBO will be able to review any complaint where they have received a signed Consent Letter from the consumer by 11:59 pm EDT on October 31, 2024.
11	What if my complaint is still open at ADRBO after November 1?	ADRBO is committed to completing the investigation and resolution of any complaints escalated to it before November 1, 2024.
12	If I escalate my complaint to ADRBO, can I switch to OBSI after November 1, 2024?	No. The ECB process is entirely voluntary, so you can withdraw from the ADRBO process any time. However, if you have started your complaint escalation at ADRBO, you will be expected to complete it at ADRBO and you will not be eligible to reopen it at OBSI after November 1, 2024.
13	Who should I escalate my complaint to? Do I have a choice where to escalate my complaint?	If you escalate your complaint before November 1, 2024 you can only escalate it to ADRBO. If you escalate your complaint on or after November 1, 2024 you can only escalate it to OBSI. However, because you have up to 180 days from the time you received the final response letter from your bank to escalate your complaint, you have the option to escalate now to ADRBO or wait until November 1, 2024 to escalate to OBSI.
14	Which ECB is better? Should I wait?	Both ADRBO and OBSI are government-approved organizations that specialize in bank consumer dispute resolution. You can escalate to ADRBO now or you may choose to wait and escalate to OBSI on or after November 1, 2024 as long as you do so within 180 days of receiving the final response letter from your bank.
15	Should I wait to complain to my bank?	No, you should raise any complaint with your bank as soon as you become aware of the problem and use any available internal escalation options to work with your bank toward resolution of your complaint. ECBs will only consider your complaint if you and your bank have been unable to resolve the issue to your satisfaction first.