

# Appealing a Parking Charge Notice

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

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](#).

Your options for appealing a Parking Charge Notice are outlined below.

# **Your options for appealing a Parking Charge Notice**

Your options for appealing a Parking Charge Notice depends on:

- what operator issued the PCN
- if you were driving the car or not
- or when you received the PCN.

Read our step by step guide below on what to do in each case.

## **If you are the keeper of the vehicle, not the driver**

You can appeal a parking charge notice if you are the registered keeper of the vehicle but were not driving it the day the parking charge notice 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.

Please be advised that the Consumer Council cannot appeal on your behalf, however, we have provided a template letter that you can use and a step by step guide on how to appeal.

### **Follow these steps to appeal the PCN:**

Each parking operator offers different ways to appeal, so check the letter you have received for details.

1. Keep the letter you have received for your records.
2. Use our [template letter](#) to appeal either online, via email, or via letter (address details below).

Our tips and advice:

- If appealing online, do not provide any other information than what is already detailed on the PCN letter. Do not provide a telephone number as this is not necessary for your appeal. An email address is only necessary if you are

appealing online or via 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, make sure you reference your PCN number and vehicle registration, using the suggested wording provided.

The parking operator has up to 35 working days to issue a response to your appeal, as per the British Parking Association's (BPA) Code of Practice, or 28 days if the operator is a member of the International Parking Community (IPC).

Please be advised that not all parking operators will accept our appeal template. If the parking operator has sufficient evidence to prove that the registered keeper was driving the car at the time of issue, then they may decide to uphold the PCN and pursue the charges via Debt Recovery or court action.

## **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](#).

## **If you were driving the vehicle**

You can appeal the parking charge notice if you were driving the vehicle, but believe it was issued incorrectly or extenuating circumstances are involved. For example, if there were no signs in the car park or the signs were broken or hard to read, an error with the car park's cameras, receiving a PCN for parking in a disabled bay despite having a valid blue badge, or you are an employee within the grounds of the car park.

All parking companies that are a member of an Accredited Trade Association (ATA), such as the British Parking Association (BPA) or International Parking Community (IPC) will have a Code of Practice that they must adhere to. The Code of Practice will include guidelines for the parking operator on areas such as signage, ANPR cameras and issuing PCN letters. If you feel that the PCN has been issued unfairly or that there is an issue with regards to the signage, it is always beneficial to check the Code of Practice to see what the rules are and if the parking operator has followed them.

For more information on the ATA's and its Code of Practice, just click on the links below:

- [Click here to read the British Parking Association \(BPA\) Code of Practice.](#)
- [Click here to read the International Parking Community \(IPC\) Code of Practice.](#)

If you want to appeal a PCN due to extenuating circumstances it is useful to gather as much evidence as you can to support your appeal. For example, if you believe that the signage does not comply with the ATA's minimum standards or that the wording was misleading or unclear, then take photographs of the signs to include in your appeal.

The Consumer Council can assist vulnerable consumers with their appeal or offer support to those who wish to appeal due to extenuating circumstances.

Contact us via email to [contact@consumercouncil.org.uk](mailto:contact@consumercouncil.org.uk) or call us on 0800 121 6022 if your circumstances meet the above criteria.

## **Employee at a site of privately managed car park**

If you are an employee at a site that has a privately managed car park, you should be on an exemption list to prevent you from receiving a PCN. You should speak to your employer about this and ensure that they have your vehicle registration so it can be passed to the parking operator and added to the exemption list.

If you get a PCN despite being on the exemption list, raise this with your employer as they may be in a position to appeal the PCN on your behalf. If you can provide evidence of your employment and the dates and hours worked, this will support your appeal.

## **You received no PCN letters except the letter from Debt Recovery**

You should receive two "Notice to Keeper" letters before the issue is passed to a debt recovery agency. If you don't receive these notices, but just receive a debt recovery agency, the parking operator may be in breach of its trade association's Code of Practice.

By not issuing you the Notice to Keeper letters, you are being denied the opportunity to:

- Pay the PCN at a reduced rate of £60 or £100 before being increased to £170.

- Appeal the PCN as the 28 days to appeal will have passed once the PCN escalates to debt recovery.

If this has happened to you, you have the option of making a formal complaint to the parking operator and asking them to investigate its handling of your PCN.

Most parking operators will have a complaints policy which should be available on its website. There should be a number of ways to make a complaint including a postal address and either an email address or online form to complete.

In your complaint, we recommend that you refer to the Code of Practice and highlight the specific parts of the Code that have been breached.

If you do not receive a response or you are unhappy with the response, you can then escalate your complaint to its Trade Association and ask that they investigate the matter further.

To find out which trade association your parking operator is a member of, just use the links below.

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

## **If your appeal is rejected**

If you have already raised an appeal with the parking operator and your appeal has been rejected, you may be able to escalate your appeal to the Parking on Private Land Appeals (POPLA) depending on your circumstances, you may be able to make a further appeal to the landowner.

The [POPLA website](#) has a guide on how to submit an appeal.

If you are escalating your appeal to POPLA, you only have 28 days from the date on the operator's rejection letter to make the appeal. You will be given a 10 digit verification code by the parking operator, you must use this when making your appeal to POPLA.

It is free to contact POPLA and this can be done via its website or in writing to the following address:

POPLA,  
PO Box 1270,  
Warrington,  
WA4 9RL

If you have appealed to POPLA and your appeal was unsuccessful, you will have no further formal avenues to appeal the PCN. The options at that stage are to pay the PCN or ignore it.

You could try to identify the landowner of the site and contact them to appeal the PCN, but there is no guarantee that your appeal will be accepted.

## **Made an appeal to the operator but haven't received a response**

Parking operators have 35 working days to respond to an appeal and during this period, the operator should place a hold on the PCN until they have completed their investigations. A PCN should not increase or be passed to debt recovery until you have received the response, and if your appeal has been rejected.

If you have made an appeal but received no response within 35 working days, then the parking operator may be in breach of the Code of Practice as set by its trade association.

If this happens you have two options to pursue the matter further.

### **1. Make a formal complaint to the parking operator**

Most parking operators will have a complaints policy which should be available on its website. There should be a number of ways to make a complaint including a postal address and either an email address or online form to complete.

In your complaint, we recommend that you refer to the Code of Practice and highlight the specific parts of the Code that have been breached.

If you have received further letters from the parking operator or the PCN has been



passed to a debt recovery agency, despite you not having received a response to your appeal, then you can highlight how the parking operator has not only failed to respond within 35 days but has also failed to place a hold on the PCN as per the Code of Practice.

The response timeframe will vary depending on the operator and may take up to 28 days.

## 2. **Escalation**

If you do not receive a response from the parking operator or you remain unhappy with the response, then you can report the parking operator to its trade association.

To find out which trade association your parking operator is a member of, just use the links below.

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

When you contact them, tell them when you made your appeal, provide any acknowledgements you received from the parking operator along with copies of the formal complaint and the response provided. Highlight to them how the operator has breached its Code of Practice.

The trade association will investigate the matter further with the parking operator.

## **Ignoring a PCN**

If you ignore a PCN, the charge will increase to £170 and will be passed to a debt recovery agency. The debt agency will send the registered keeper letters threatening legal action if the charge remains unpaid.

The only way a PCN can be enforced is if the parking operator takes it to Small Claims Court.

Ignoring a PCN will not affect your credit rating, this would only happen if the parking operator took the case to court, the judge ruled in their favour and you still refused to pay.

It is also important to note that clamping is still legal in Northern Ireland and some parking operators have been known to clamp vehicles that have a number of outstanding PCNs against their registration plate.

If you do choose to ignore a PCN you should follow our top tips to avoid getting any further PCNs to reduce the risk of being clamped in the future.

## 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 meet the above requirements and need specific help with a Parking Charge Notice, contact us on 0800 121 6022 or email [contact@consumercouncil.org.uk](mailto:contact@consumercouncil.org.uk) including a copy of the PCN letter and information on your specific circumstances.



## 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](#)