



Contact Policy **IWGB Legal Department**

IWGB is a not-for-profit member organisation with limited resources. Through the Legal Department (the "LD") we strive to offer our members professional support with employment- or workplace-related cases. Each individual case is important to us and we put a great deal of our resources into each case.

Casework is a collaboration between the member and the LD and communication is vital to running a case effectively.

The LD staff has to meet certain standards in terms of keeping members informed and making sure they understand what is being done on their behalf. Likewise, members have a responsibility to treat their own case seriously.

Members willing to use or using the LD must:

- Promptly get in contact with the LD to open a case, in order to allow the LD staff enough time to work on the case before the expiry of any known deadline;
- Make sure they keep the Legal Department promptly informed of any changes in their situation and inform the Legal Department in advance if they will not be contactable for a period of time (for example due to holiday).

Failure to do so may result in the case not being opened (for example, if the deadline is fast approaching without the LD having enough time to work on the case) or being closed, in accordance with the steps outlined below.

We understand that there may be many reasons why a member may not wish to pursue a case, and no case will be taken forward without the member's approval. However, members must promptly inform the LD if they no longer wish to pursue their case so that the LD is not wasting resources that could be used to support other members.

Procedures that will be followed in terms of contacts are:

- Members who contacted the LD in order to open a case shall make themselves available to be contacted by the caseworker assigned to their case within 5 working days to arrange the mandatory initial meeting. The meeting will be scheduled having regard for the member's and the caseworker's availability.
- The appointed caseworker will make a maximum of 2 attempts to call the member and schedule the mandatory initial meeting. Failure to answer to both attempts will result in the case not being opened by the LD, and the member shall be responsible to contact the LD again if they still wish to open a case. If a member fails to show up to more than one scheduled meeting, except in exceptional circumstances support will be withdrawn.

- Members who have a case pending with the LD must inform the LD staff in advance if they will be out of contact for longer than 48 hours.
- Otherwise, members shall make their best endeavours to respond or provide the requested information/documents within the timeframe given by the caseworker, except in exceptional circumstances. If no timeframe is given by the caseworker, members shall respond by no later than 48 hours, except in exceptional circumstances.
- If there is no response within the above timeframe, the caseworker will make 2 additional attempts to contact the member and/or gather the information/documents requested.
- Unless the member responds to the last attempt within the given timeframe (or within 48 hours, if no timeframe is provided), the case will automatically be closed and the support from the LD will be withdrawn for that case. The case will not be reopened except in exceptional circumstances.
- Members must also make their best efforts to attend meetings. Members are required to inform their caseworkers at least 12 hours in advance of the meeting if they cannot attend a scheduled meeting.
- If the member fails to attend a meeting without informing the LD in advance, the LD staff will make 2 additional attempts to contact the member to reschedule the meeting. Unless the member responds to the last attempt within the given timeframe (or within 48 hours, if no timeframe is provided), par. 1 will apply if the case is not opened with the LD yet, while par. 5 will apply if the case is already open with the LD.
- A Legal Officer shall oversee the circumstances leading to the closure of a case under par. 5 and will make his/her best endeavours to ensure the most appropriate execution of this policy.
- In any case where the caseworker dealing with a case feels the member is not making efforts to cooperate with the handling of their case, the caseworker may refer the matter to a Legal Officer which will take a decision on whether to withdraw services for that case.
- Members who believe there are exceptional circumstances in their case should contact a Legal Officer in the Legal Department outlining the reasons why they were out of contact and may be asked to provide evidence to support their claim. The Legal Officer will have the final decision over whether or not to reinstate Legal Department support.