In the field of civil justice, pending procedures and proceedings initiated before the end of the transition period will continue under EU law. The e-Justice Portal, on the basis of a mutual agreement with the UK, will maintain the relevant information related to the United Kingdom until the end of 2024.

National courts and other non-judicial bodies

Scotland

National Human Rights Institutions
Ombudsperson
Specialised human rights bodies
Other

National Human Rights Institutions

The following institutions may be able to provide advice in relation to your particular circumstances.

1. The Equality and Human Rights Commission

The Equality and Human Rights Commission is the National Equality Body (NEB) for Scotland, England and Wales, and works to eliminate discrimination and promote equality across the nine protected characteristics in the Equality Act 2010: age, disability, sex, race, religion and belief, pregnancy and maternity, marriage and civil partnership, sexual orientation and gender reassignment. It is an "A status" National Human Rights Institution, independent of government, and shares its mandate to promote and protect human rights in Scotland with the Scottish Human Rights Commission.

As a National Human Rights Institution, the EHRC:

promotes awareness, understanding and protection of human rights

encourages public authorities to comply with the Human Rights Act

provides information on human rights for members of the public, civil society organisations and public authorities

monitors the human rights situation in Great Britain, and reports its findings and recommendations to the UN, government and Parliament

advises the UK Government and Parliament and the devolved Scottish and Welsh administrations on the human rights implications of policies and proposed legislation

uses its legal powers to improve human rights protection

The EHRC has legal powers to, amongst other things:

take judicial review proceedings - a type of court proceeding in which a judge reviews the lawfulness of a decision or action made by a public body

threaten judicial review before legislation is passed if it thinks a proposed law change will breach a group's human rights

to take enforcement action should public authorities fail to meet the requirements of the regulations in the Equality Act 2010

intervene in human rights cases taken by others (known as 'third party' intervention) - however the Commission cannot support individual human rights cases that don't raise an equality issue

hold inquiries into any issue of human rights - if the Commission makes recommendations for change and improvement in policy, practice and legislation to any organisaton, they must have regard to the recommendations

serve a compliance notice if it thinks that a public authority has not complied with its equality duty - this may require it to comply with a duty or it may detail the steps that need to be taken to ensure compliance

http://www.equalityhumanrights.com/

Contact details:

Equality and Human Rights Commission - Scotland Office

Telephone: 0141 288 5910

E-mail: scotland@equalityhumanrights.com

BSL users can contact the Commission on an equitable basis to hearing stakeholders. For further information contact the Equality and Human Rights Commission at http://www.equalityhumanrights.com

Equality Advisory Support Service

Telephone: 0808 800 0082

Textphone: 0808 800 0084

Email: eass@mailgb.custhelp.com

Post: FREEPOST EASS Helpline FPN6521

Also available through the website http://www.equalityadvisoryservice.com are BSL interpretation, webchat and a contact form.

Opening hours:

09:00 to 19:00 Monday to Friday

10:00 to 14:00 Saturday

Closed on Sundays and Bank Holidays

2. The Scottish Human Rights Commission

The Scottish Human Rights Commission is the National Human Rights Institution for Scotland, compliant with the United Nations Paris Principles relating to the status of national institutions and with the highest level of accreditation ("A status"). The SHRC is an independent body established by the Scottish Parliament in 2008 with a general duty to promote awareness, understanding and respect for all human rights - economic, social, cultural, civil and political - to everyone, everywhere in Scotland, and to encourage best practice in relation to human rights. It can also report directly to the UN on human rights issues. The Commission's full duties and powers are set out in the Scottish Commission for Human Rights Act 2006.

The SHRC has powers to:

recommend changes to law, policy and practice

promote human rights through education, training and publishing research
conduct inquiries into the policies and practices of Scottish public authorities
The SHRC does not handle complaints or provide a help service to individuals. However, its *Help with Human Rights* leaflet gives details of organisations and services that may be able to provide advice and assistance. This leaflet is available on the SHRC website.
Contact details:
Scottish Human Rights Commission
Bridgeside House
99 McDonald Road
Edinburgh
EH7 4NS

Tel: 0131 297 570

Email: hello@scottishhumanrights.com
Weblink: Scottish Human Rights Commission

Ombudspersons

1. Scottish Public Services Ombudsman

The Scottish Public Services Ombudsman provides a free, independent and impartial service in relation to disputes between citizens and both local and central government, aiming to assist in the resolution of disputes or to correct unfair situations. It is the final stage of handling complaints about public bodies in Scotland (Councils, the National Health Service, housing associations, colleges and universities, prisons, most water providers, the Scottish Government and its agencies and departments and most Scottish authorities.)

The SPSO is not an appeal body for the decisions of organisations. If it finds that a decision has not been properly made, it can make recommendations but cannot change or overturn the decision. However, the Independent Review Service for the Scottish Welfare Fund does have the power to overturn and substitute decisions made by councils on Community Care and Crisis Grant applications.
The SPSO's powers and duties are set out in the Scottish Public Services Ombudsman Act 2002.

Contact details:
Freephone: 0800 377 7330
Telephone: 0131 225 5330
Post: Freepost SPSO (no need for a stamp)
In person: Bridgeside House, 99 McDonald Road, Edinburgh, EH7 4NS (opening hours Monday, Wednesday, Thursday and Friday, 9am-5pm, Tuesday 10am-5pm)
Weblink: SPSO

2. Parliamentary and Health Service Ombudsman

The Parliamentary and Health Service Ombudsman is the final stage for complaints about the NHS in England and public services delivered by the UK Government. It provides a free service and looks into complaints where someone believes there has been injustice or hardship because an organisation has not acted properly or fairly or has given a poor service and not put things right.
The Ombudsman is not part of government. It was set up by Parliament to provide an independent complaint handling service. Its powers are set out in the Parliamentary Commissioner ACt 1967 and the Health Services Commissioners Act 1993. It shares findings from casework with Parliament to help it scrutinise public service providers, and shares findings more widely with others to help drive improvements in public services. The Ombudsman is accountable to the UK Parliament and its work is scrutinised by the Public Administration and Constitutional Affairs Committee.
Before bringing a complaint to the Ombudsman, you must first complain to the organisation you are unhappy about. If your complaint is about a UK Government department or UK public organisation, you must contact an MP to refer the matter to the Ombudsman.
Weblink: Ombudsman
Contact Details:
Telephone: 0345 015 4033 (08:30 to 17:30, Monday to Friday)
Text 'call back' service: 07624 813 005
If you use BSL you can use a SignVideo service: SignVideo

Specialised Human Rights Bodies

1. Children and Young People's Commissioner Scotland

The Children and Young People's Commissioner Scotland raises awareness and understanding of children's rights and helps children to assert their rights. The Commissioner has powers to undertake investigations in respect of whether service providers have regard to the rights, interests and the views of groups of children and young people in taking decisions or actions that affect them.
Contact Details
Children and Young People's Commissioner Scotland
Bridgeside House
99 McDonald Road
Edinburgh
EH7 4NS

Telephone: 0131 346 5350
Young People's Freephone: 0800 019 1179
Text: 0770 233 5720

Email: inbox@cypcs.org.uk
Weblink: CYPCS

2. The Scottish Information Commissioner

The Scottish Information Commissioner's Office promotes and enforces both the public's right to ask for the information held by Scottish public authorities, and good practice by authorities. Through her work, the Commissioner supports the openness, transparency and accountability of public bodies.
The Commissioner is responsible for enforcing and promoting Scotland's freedom of information laws, namely:
The Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act 2002
The Environmental Information (Scotland) Regulations 2004
The INSPIRE (Scotland) Regulations 2009
The Commissioner and the Commissioner's team:
investigate applications and issue legally enforceable decisions
promote good practice amongst public authorities
provide the public with information on their rights
Contact Details
Scottish Information Commissioner
Kinburn Castle
Doubledykes Road
St Andrews
Fife
KY16 9DS

Telephone: 01334 464610
Fax: 01334 464611

E-mail: enquiries@itspublicknowledge.info
Weblink: Scottish Information Commissioner

3. Information Commissioner's Office

The Information Commissioner's Office is the UK's independent authority set up to uphold information rights in the public interest, promoting openness by public bodies and data privacy for individuals.
Contact details:
Information Commissioner's Office
Wycliffe House
Water Lane
Wilmslow
Cheshire
SK9 5AF
Telephone: 0303 123 1113 (or 01625 545745 if you would prefer not too call an '03' number)
Fax: 01625 524 510
The Information Commissioner's Office Scotland
45 Melville Street
Edinburgh
EH3 7HL
Telephone: 0131 244 9001
Email: Scotland@ico.org.uk
Weblink: Information Commissioner's Office

Other organisations

1. Citizens Advice Service

The Citizens Advice service helps people resolve their legal, money and other problems by providing free, independent and confidential advice, and by influencing policy makers.
Contact details
Citizen's Advice Direct phone line: 0808 800 9060 (Monday - Friday, 09:00-18:00)
Weblink: Citizens Advice
To contact the Citizens Advice Service, click on http://citizensadvice.org.uk/index/contact_us.htm

2. Victim Support Scotland

Victim Support Scotland (VSS) provides support and information services to victims and witnesses of crime in Scotland. This support is provided by staff and volunteers in national and local offices and court-based services across Scotland. VSS are an independent charity and not part of Police Scotland or Scottish Court. All conversations with victims and witnesses are confidential and are not shared with people outside of VSS.
VSS services are completely free.
The Victim Support Scotland website provides further information, including how to get in touch:
Victim Support Scotland
Helpline: 0800 160 1985 (Monday to Friday 8am to 8pm)

The Victims' Code for Scotland

The Victims' Code for Scotland sets out clearly and in one place the rights and support available for victims of crime in Scotland.

There is also an Easy Read Version of the VIctims' Code for Scotland available for people with learning difficulties. This describes how victims of crime should be treated within the criminal justice system, and what information, help and support they should receive.

3. The Office of the Immigration Services Commissioner

The Office of the Immigration Services Commissioner (OISC) is an independent, non-departmental public body set up under the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999.
The OISC's key responsibilities are:
regulating immigration advisers

promoting good practice by setting standards
accepting and addressing complaints about anyone giving immigration advice
prosecuting those who operate outside of the law
oversight of the regulation of those who give immigration advice and are regulated by one of the Designated Professional Bodies
The OISC does not provide immigration advice or recommend or endorse a specific adviser.
The OISC works with a wide range of organisations, including professional associations, tribunals, the UK Border Agency and voluntary bodies.
For further information see: Office of the Immigration Services Commissioner
Contact details:
Office of the Immigration Services Commissioner
5th Floor
21 Bloomsbury Street
London
WC1B 3HF
Telephone: 0845 000 0046
Email: info@oisc.gov.uk

4. The Scottish Legal Aid Board (SLAB)

The purpose of legal aid in Scotland is to provide access to justice for those people who can't afford to pay their own legal costs. The Scottish Legal Aid Board manages the legal aid system in Scotland within the scope of legislation.
To apply for legal aid you will need to find a solicitor who does legal aid work. You will need to show you can't afford to pay for legal help yourself and that your problem is serious. You may have to pay some money towards the legal costs of your case, or pay costs back later.
You may not need to pay anything at all, depending on your financial position and the type of legal help you need.
The type of legal aid you apply for depends on the type of legal help you need. Your solicitor will advise you.
Advice and assistance can help with the costs of getting legal advice from a solicitor, like information on your rights and options or help with negotiations and paperwork. It will not cover court costs.
If needed, your solicitor may however be able to represent you in court for:
a civil cases e.g. you have housing issues, you're divorcing, have disputes about your children or need help with a housing debt
a Children's Hearing e.g. you're a young person (or their parent/carer) asked to go to a hearing to sort out a problem
a criminal case e.g. you've been accused of a crime or face prison
For further information about SLAB, and to get in touch, see below.
The Scottish Legal Aid Board
Thistle House
91 Haymarket Terrace
Edinburgh,
EH12 5HE

Telephone: 0131 226 7061 (Monday to Friday 08:30 to 17:00)

British Sign Language: contact Scotland-BSL, Scotland's online interpreting service.
Email: general@slab.org.uk
Web: Scottish Legal Aid Board

5. Care Inspectorate

The Care Inspectorate regulates and inspects care services in Scotland to make sure that they meet the right standards. It jointly inspects with other regulators to check how well different organisations in local areas work to support adults and children.
Contact details
Telephone: 0345 600 9527

Email: enquiries@careinspectorate.com
Weblink: Care Inspectorate

6. Mental Welfare Commission Scotland

The Commission protect and promote the human rights of people with mental illness, learning disabilities, dementia and related conditions. They do this by empowering individuals and their carers, monitoring mental health and incapacity law, and influencing and challenging service providers and policy makers.
Advice line: 0800 389 6809 (service users and carers only) or 0131 313 8777 (professionals) (Monday-Thursday 09:00-17:00, Friday 09:00-16:30)

Email: enquiries@mwcscot.org.uk
Weblink: Mental Welfare Commission Scotland

Further information or assistance

The following organisations and bodies may be able to provide information or assistance according to their remits.
UK Government website for UK citizens: Gov.UK
Shelter give housing advice: Shelter Scotland
ACAS give employment advice: ACAS
National Debtline give debt advice: National Debt Line
The StepChange Debt Charity gives debt advice: Step Change
The Money Advice Service gives advice about money and financial issues: Money Advice Service
The Law Society of Scotland can help you find a lawyer, including for human rights matters: Law Society
Scottish Child Law Centre provides free legal advice for, and about, children: SCLC
Contact has information, support and advice for the families of disabled children: Contact
Patient Advice and Support Service (PASS) at Citizens Advice Bureau is an independent service which provides information, advice and support to patients and their carers: PASS

The Scottish Association for Mental Health: SAMH
Care Information Scotland is a telephone and website service providing information about care services for older people living in Scotland: CIS
SurvivorScotland oversees the National Strategy for survivors of childhood abuse: SurvivorScotland
Scottish Helpline for Older People: Age UK Scotland
Scottish Women's Aid: SWA
Rape Crisis Scotland RCS
Scottish Refugee Council: SRC
Ethnic Minorities Law Centre: EMLC
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