



Communique 3 of 2023 **Requests for postponements**

The Office of Ombudsperson for Financial Services (the “Office”) refers to the number of requests for postponement obtained from complainants following the scheduling of Hearings.

As the public has been made aware, the Office has been operating with skeleton resources since its inception. Considerable delays have occurred in the processing and investigation of cases.

We have received requests for postponements from complainants with suggested dates. Complainants are informed that we will grant requests for postponement but we are not in a position to accommodate their dates. We have a massive number of cases lined up and therefore the complainants who request for postponement will have to wait for several months before we may be able to reschedule a Hearing.

The attention of the public is drawn to the section 18 (1) (c) of the Ombudsperson for Financial Services Act, which provides:

- (1) Any person who –*
...(c) willfully fails to attend a hearing after having been summoned;
...shall commit an offence and shall, on conviction, be liable to a fine not exceeding 500,000 rupees and to imprisonment for a term not exceeding 5 years.

Complainants are therefore requested to make appropriate arrangements to attend Hearings on time, when they are summoned.

Office of Ombudsperson for Financial Services

Thursday, 23 March 2023