



Licensing Team, 4<sup>th</sup> Floor, the Woolwich Centre, 35 Wellington Street, SE18 6HQ  
[licensing@royalgreenwich.gov.uk](mailto:licensing@royalgreenwich.gov.uk) / 020 8921 8018

## **Appeals Process for businesses regarding disputing the award of star ratings**

### **1 Introduction**

- 1.1 This procedure describes what an operator of a licensable animal activity must do if they do not agree with the star rating that has been awarded by the Royal Borough in respect of their licence.

### **2 How to make an appeal involving a star rating**

- 2.1 To ensure fairness to businesses, local authorities must have an appeal procedure in place for businesses to dispute the star rating given in respect of their business.
- 2.2 The Royal Borough's appeal procedure is relevant where the business wishes to dispute the star rating given as not reflecting the animal welfare standards and risk level of their business at the time of the inspection. This process should not be used if an operator of a licensable activity has made improvements to their business and wishes to be reassessed – in this case, they should apply for re-inspection (refer to '*Royal Borough of Greenwich Procedure - Requests for re-inspection for re-rating purposes*').

### **3 How we determine the length of a licence and the star rating system**

- 3.1 This procedure relates to the risk-based system that must be used when issuing animal activities licences under the Animal Welfare (Licensing of Activities Involving Animals) (England) Regulations 2018, with the exception of "Keeping or Training Animals for Exhibition" where all licences are issued for 3 years. This system should be used to determine both the length of the licence and the star rating to award. The Royal Borough will follow this prescribed risk-based approach in full.
- 3.2 The risk assessment procedure is described in the Government (DEFRA) guidance document: The Animal (Licensing of Activities Involving Animals)

(England) Regulations 2018 – Procedural Guidance Notes for Local Authorities (October 2018). This document can be found on the Royal Greenwich website at:

[https://www.royalgreenwich.gov.uk/info/200300/other\\_licences/702/animal\\_licences](https://www.royalgreenwich.gov.uk/info/200300/other_licences/702/animal_licences) .

- 3.3 The purpose of the document is to ensure consistency in implementation and operation of the licensing system by local authorities, and to ensure that consumers can be confident that the star rating applied to businesses is an accurate reflection of both their risk level and the animal welfare standards that they adopt.

#### **4 Making an appeal against a star rating**

- 4.1 A business disputing a rating should be encouraged to discuss this informally first with the ‘inspecting officer’ (see 4.2) so that there is an opportunity to help explain to the business how the rating was worked out, as this may help resolve the matter without the business having to lodge an appeal. Any such discussions do not form part of this formal appeal process and do not change the deadline within which an appeal must be lodged.
- 4.2 The Royal Borough has appointed inspecting officers from the Animal Welfare and Health Team of the City of London Corporation, who undertake inspections on its behalf. A business disputing a rating will have received an email from the inspecting officer with a list of details identified as needing attention in relation to an application for a licence.
- 4.3 It is advisable that a business before making an appeal carefully considers the matters raised by the inspecting officer and the reasons why a particular star rating has been awarded before contacting the inspecting officer.
- 4.4 If a business still wishes to appeal the star rating given by the Royal Borough, the appeal should be made in writing to the local authority Appeals Officer care of:

Directorate of Housing & Safer Communities

Licensing Team

4<sup>th</sup> Floor, The Woolwich Centre

35 Wellington Street  
London  
SE18 6HQ

[licensing@royalgreenwich.gov.uk](mailto:licensing@royalgreenwich.gov.uk)

020 8921 8018

4.5 The correspondence should include the following information and any other matters relevant to the appeal:

- Name of licence operator and business
- Licence number
- Address of licensable premises
- Type of licensable activity
- Grounds of appeal – for example, why do you think your star rating and length of your licence does not accurately reflect your business and the way it is run? You will need to list specific reasons in relation to the Government’s licensing guidance made under the Animal Welfare (Licensing of Activities Involving Animals) (England) Regulations 2018. All the information you need about your specific type of licence can be found on the Council’s website:

[https://www.royalgreenwich.gov.uk/info/200300/other\\_licences/2025/animal\\_licences](https://www.royalgreenwich.gov.uk/info/200300/other_licences/2025/animal_licences) .

## **5 Time period for making an appeal**

5.1 Businesses have 21 days (including weekends and bank holidays) following the issue of their licence in which to appeal the star rating.

## **6 Determining the outcome of an appeal**

6.1 No officer involved in the production of the rating, or in the inspection on which the rating is based, will consider the appeal.

6.2 The Royal Borough has 21 days (including weekends and bank holidays) from the date they receive the appeal to consider the appeal, within which time they must issue a decision to the business.

- 6.3 The Royal Borough will determine the outcome of an appeal by considering the paperwork associated with the inspection and the past record of the business. In some circumstances, a further visit to the establishment may be required.
- 6.4 The costs of any additional inspections related to the appeal will normally be borne by the applicant, unless it results in a higher rating being awarded. This will depend on the nature of the dispute and whether a decision can or cannot be made on the basis of the paperwork. You will be notified in writing by the Council should we decide the need to charge you for the appeal. This would usually be where an additional inspection is required of the licensable premises by a veterinary officer.

Please contact our service to enquiry about the cost of an appeal. The contact details are shown at the end of this procedure.

## **7 How to challenge the outcome of the appeal**

- 7.1 If the business disagrees with the outcome of the appeal, they can challenge the Royal Borough's decision by means of judicial review. The business also has recourse to the local authority complaints procedure (including taking the matter to the Local Government Ombudsman where appropriate) if they consider that the Royal Borough service has not been properly delivered.
- 7.2 The business should initially use the Royal Greenwich complaints procedure prior to making a referral to the Local Government Ombudsman. The Ombudsman will not normally consider a referral to them unless the business has first exhausted the local authority complaints procedure. Details of the Royal Greenwich complaints procedure can be found at:

[https://www.royalgreenwich.gov.uk/info/200161/complaints/548/complaints\\_about\\_the\\_royal\\_borough\\_of\\_greenwich](https://www.royalgreenwich.gov.uk/info/200161/complaints/548/complaints_about_the_royal_borough_of_greenwich) .

- 7.3 The address and contact details of the Local Government Ombudsman Service are as follows:

Local Government & Social Care Ombudsman  
PO Box 4771

Coventry  
CV4 0EH

Telephone: 0300 061 0614

Web: <https://www.lgo.org.uk/contact-us>

## **8 Further questions and clarity**

- 8.1 If you would like any further information or clarity regarding this procedure, please do not hesitate to contact the Royal Borough using the following details:

Licensing Team  
4<sup>th</sup> Floor, the Woolwich Centre  
35 Wellington Street  
SE18 6HQ

[licensing@royalgreenwich.gov.uk](mailto:licensing@royalgreenwich.gov.uk)  
020 8921 8018