**Complaint Letter**

**Failure to provide information in accessible format – public body**

To: Name of the public body

Address

Also by email

From: your name

Address:

Phone:

Email

Date:

Dear (company’s name)

**Re: Complaint about disability discrimination – the Equality Act 2010**

This is an official complaint, I would like it to be registered and investigated under your complaints procedure.

I am writing this letter of complaint because you did not provide me with information in a format I need. I would like you ensure you meet the needs of Disabled people when exercising your functions. I believe you are in breach of the Equality Act 2010. This letter explains what went wrong and what I want you to do to make things right.

**I am a Disabled person under the Equality Act 2010**

I am a Disabled person within the meaning of section 6 of the Equality Act 2010.

[Describe your impairment and the impact it has on you. For example: I am a person with learning difficulties. As a person with learning difficulties I need support to understand information. Additional efforts should be made to explain things to me in simple words and printed information should be in easy read format.

[Describe the alternative format or communication support you need. For example: Written information in an ‘easy read’ format when straightforward words and phrases are used supported by pictures, diagrams, symbols and / or photographs to aid understanding and to illustrate the text. You can find more information about easy read format here <http://www.easy-read-online.co.uk/media/10612/comm%20basic%20guidelines%20for%20people%20who%20commission%20easy%20read%20info.pdf>]

**The issue I am complaining about**

Give details of what happened, when and where and what information you needed in accessible format.

For example: on the X date I received a letter from you informing me about the outcome of my assessment for X benefit.

Describe what exactly went wrong, for example: This letter was in standard print in spite of the fact that I told you on many occasions over the phone and in benefits forms that I need information in easy read.

Describe the impact this had on you, for example: inconvenience, feeling humiliated, any financial impact, were you unable to understand information and act upon it? Were you unable to express your views?

As said above, I need written information to be in simple words with pictures, otherwise I cannot understand it fully. You did not provide this to me and as a result I could not understand what the letter said. I feel angry because I feel I am being treated as if I’m a second class citizen. I am still not sure if I have got the deal I wanted.

Describe whether this situation happens regularly.

**How you breached the Equality Act 2010**

You are a public body exercising public functions under Section 29 of the Equality Act 2010. Section 15 of the Equality Act says you must not discriminate against Disabled people because of something arising as a consequence of their disability, when you exercise a public function.

Section 20 of the Equality Act 2010 requires you to take such steps as it is reasonable to ensure Disabled people like me can access your services like everybody else. Those steps should include: changing policies or the way you operate, altering a physical feature or providing an auxiliary aid or service. Information in alternative format is an auxiliary aid or service.

Section 20(6) of the Equality Act 2010 says that when in order to use or access services like everybody else a Disabled person needs information in alternative formats, the steps that it is reasonable to take include ensuring that information is provided in the alternative format.

I made it clear to you that in order for me to understand your letters and act upon them I need them to be in easy read format. This has not been provided.

By failing to send your correspondence in a format I need you failed to make reasonable adjustments for me and therefore discriminated against me.

**Obtaining information**

Please provide me with all written information you have under my name and the following information about the incident I am complaining about:

* Audio recordings of the phone calls I made from \_\_\_\_\_\_ to \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.
* Any letters or emails relating to the incident;
* Details of any policies you have in respect of provision of information in alternative formats.

**What I Would Like to Achieve by this Complaint**

1. A written apology;
2. A change in your policies and procedures ensuring Disabled people who need information in alternative formats are provided with it without delay. Or a commitment to develop a policy on the provision of information in alternative formats, ensuring Disabled people are getting information in a format they need.
3. A commitment from you to train your staff in Disability Equality and their duties under the Equality Act.
4. Compensation for the discrimination and injury to feelings that I experienced.

**Next Steps**

I very much hope we can resolve this matter amicably. I look forward to hearing from you within the next 21 days. If you believe you have not breached the Equality Act 2010, please give your reasons.

I am happy to discuss with you other ways to resolve this dispute; however, if I do not hear from you, or if you deny that you are in breach of the Equality Act then I will consider taking legal action against you.

Yours sincerely