

Board on Disputes concerning telephone bills

P.O.Box 4594 Nydalen

N-0404 Oslo

Phone: + 47 23 40 05 81

e-mail: britt.eva.haaland@forbrukerradet.no

Structure

The Board is established in agreement between the Consumer Council and the major telephone companies on the Norwegian market. It is composed of a neutral chairperson and two members, of which the two parties appoint one each. The chairperson shall have a legal background. A secretariat is established to serve the Board.

Powers

The Board has a mandate to handle complaints from consumers claiming that a telephone company, that is party to the agreement, has claimed excessive payment for the use of telephone (including mobile phones) and/or excessive fees. The Board may also take up complaints from professionals, given that the bill is predominantly related to personal purposes. Furthermore, the Board may give general statements based on the considerations and decisions given by the Board. The chairman may reject cases that are not deemed fit for handling. The case may be rejected if a decision cannot be made without oral presentations by the parties.

Procedure

Before the dispute can be taken up, the plaintiff must have made a written complaint to the company in question that has not resulted in an amicable settlement. Cases shall be brought to the Board in writing, and no later than four weeks from the consumer has received a final reaction to his complaint, given that this reaction includes information on the possibility of bringing the case before the Board, and on the time limit. Under particular circumstances, the case may be handled even if it is submitted after the expiry of the time limit. The secretariat shall gather the information necessary for the handling of the case. The secretariat shall establish a neutral position throughout the preparation of the case. A special complaint form shall be used. The secretariat shall see to it that the form has been filled in correctly, and may elaborate an additional summary. The form and the summary shall be submitted to the parties and to the members of the Board.

The Board shall consider the case on the basis of the documentation submitted and the original documents of the case, and may also consult an expert opinion. The report shall include the decision and possible dissents, which shall be reasoned. The decision should include a brief summary of the case and a statement of the basis for the decision. The Board may resume a concluded case if new information or evidence is presented, given that it is considered highly probable that this information or evidence might have led to another decision.

Costs

The handling of cases is free of charge for the consumer. The parties to the agreement cover their own expenses for members of the Board. Salary to the

chairman and expenses for the secretariat shall be covered, subject to an agreed key, by the companies that are party to the agreement.

Nature of the decision/Enforcement

The decisions of the Board are advisory. If the decision is in favor of the consumer, and the defendant does not intend to comply, he shall give a reasoned notification thereof to the consumer and to the Board within three weeks.