TRAI's Telecom Consumers Complaint Redressal (Fourth Amendment) Regulations 2026: complaint centres to run 24×7, with human help at least 16 hours a day

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News

On 2 Nov 2026 the Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI) issued the 'Telecom Consumers Complaint Redressal (Fourth Amendment) Regulations, 2026'. Operators' complaint centres must now work 24 hours on all days, using human agents, automated systems, AI agents or a mix – but human assistance must be available for at least 16 hours a day. Complaints and appeals can also be filed through the operator's mobile app. The time to file an appeal is cut from 30 to 15 days; the Advisory Committee stage is removed; dedicated help desks for persons with disabilities are required.

Key facts

Issued	TRAI, 2 Nov 2026; 4th amendment to the 2012 Complaint Redressal Regulations
24×7	Complaint centre round the clock; human help ≥ 16 hrs/day; human oversight of AI
Appeal	Window 30 → 15 days; Appellate Authority decides in 15 days; Advisory Committee stage dropped
New channel	Complaints, appeals, service requests via operator's mobile app

Oversight	Feedback surveys (published quarterly); grievance oversight committee with consumer-group members; financial disincentives
ISPs	Applies to ISPs with over 10,000 subscribers; turnover test dropped

Background

- Consultation: TRAI released the draft of this amendment for public comment on 7 May 2026; operators and consumer groups sent comments.
- Bodies: TRAI is the regulator set up under the TRAI Act, 1997. A 2000 amendment created the Telecom Disputes Settlement and Appellate Tribunal (TDSAT), which hears disputes between licensor and licensee, between service providers, and between a provider and a group of consumers, plus appeals against TRAI's decisions.
- Citizen tools: the Department of Telecommunications' (DoT) 'Sanchar Saathi' portal – launched on 16 May 2023; block lost/stolen phones (CEIR), check connections in one's name, report fraud calls.

Tamil Nadu link: India's first telephone exchanges opened on 28 January 1882 in Madras (Chennai), along with Calcutta and Bombay – run by England's Oriental Telephone Company under an 1881 licence (BSNL history).

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