

STAKEHOLDER STATEMENT

THE COMMUNITY SCHEMES OMBUD SERVICE (CSOS):

DELAY IN THE DISPUTE RESOLUTION PROCESS

ATTENTION: PARTIES TO DISPUTES LODGED / CSOS STAKEHOLDERS

Dear Stakeholders,

Further to our stakeholder statement dated 16 August 2024, we wish to provide you with an update regarding pending disputes, adjudication capacity, and the ongoing automation of the dispute resolution process through CSOS Connect.

Pending Disputes

Although CSOS has made notable progress in reducing the dispute backlog over the past six months, several older disputes remain pending, awaiting allocation to an adjudicator. Our Dispute Resolution Team continues to prioritise cases in chronological order from the oldest to the most recent.

Please note that urgent disputes, such as those involving unlawful disconnection of water or electricity without a court order, safety issues, and access to schemes, are still prioritised and addressed within 48 hours.

Current Dispute Statistics:

- 2023/24 Financial Year:
- Disputes Received: 15,514
- Disputes Finalised: 13,529
- Disputes Pending Finalisation: 1,985

Adjudication Capacity

In February 2025, CSOS appointed a supplementary panel of 13 external adjudicators. This has strengthened our adjudication capacity and significantly improved output. Further expansion of the adjudicator panel is under consideration to further support dispute resolution efforts.

Automation of the dispute process through CSOS Connect

We are excited to announce that the Disputes Module on CSOS Connect has been developed and is undergoing quality assurance. The testing of the functionality commence during March 2025. A review of these interventions will be done end of quarter 2 of the ensuing financial year.

We remain committed to delivering an effective and efficient dispute resolution process. We appeal for your patience as we continue to improve the system and output. Should you wish to make any enquiries about your lodged dispute, you may contact the relevant CSOS Senior Manager:

- Renusha Mahabeer: KZN, FS & MP Email: renusha.mahabeer@csos.org.za
- Thora Sikholiwe: WC, EC & NC Email: thora.sikholiwe@csos.org.za
- Charmaine Johnstone: GP, NW & LIM Email: charmaine.johnstone@csos.org.za

Alternatively, you may contact our Call centre on 0800 000 653 for assistance.

Acting Chief Ombud

Community Scheme Ombud Services (CSOS)