

## Introduction

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The Alternative Dispute Resolution for Consumer Disputes (Competent Authorities and Information) Regulations 2015 (ADR Regulations) affect all traders who sell goods and services to consumers, with the exception of a very small section of health sector contracts.

Applicable sectors include finance, insurance, energy, retail, leisure services and transport services, to name just a few.

The regulations are relevant to sole traders and limited companies, whether working from a business premises or at home. From gardening companies, cafés, pubs and large retail outlets, through to corner shops, petrol stations and even ice cream vans, they are all subject to these regulations if their internal complaints handling process has not been able to resolve the dispute. Businesses are required by law to inform consumers about the process and their engagement in Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR).

### What is Alternative Dispute Resolution?

ADR describes a process for resolving disputes between consumers and traders that doesn't involve going to court. This is done by means of putting the consumer and the trader in contact with a neutral third party, with the aim of assisting a speedy, mutual agreement.

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