

# Appeals process

Note: "Cochrane Review" refers to protocols for Cochrane Reviews, Cochrane Reviews, and Cochrane Reviews that are being updated.

The appeals process is as follows:

1. Appeals or, where this is not possible, notification of the intention to submit an appeal, must be submitted as soon as possible, and no later than 7 days, after receipt of the editorial decision. A notification of the intention to submit an appeal must be followed by a full appeal submission within 28 days.
2. When an appeal, or notification of the intention to submit an appeal, is received, implementation of the editorial decision will be suspended, pending outcome of the appeal.
3. All appeals must be submitted in writing (by mail or email) by the contact author, with copies to all co-authors. Appeals must be submitted to the Managing Editor of the Cochrane Review Group (CRG) in the first instance, and should be clearly labelled "Appeal of editorial decision". The appeal must describe in detail why the authors disagree with the editorial decision, with reference to the points made in the editorial decision report.
4. As only one appeal per Cochrane Review will be considered, the authors need to ensure that all relevant points are included in the original appeal submission.
5. Receipt of an appeal submission will be acknowledged within 3 working days of receipt by the CRG's Managing Editor. If possible, a definitive response will be made within two weeks. If this is not possible, an interim response will be given within two weeks. Further interim responses will be provided until the appeal is closed.
6. At the CRG the appeal will be considered by at least one independent Editor who was not involved in the original decision. If this is not possible within the CRG, an Editor from another CRG will be asked to consider the original decision. The Editor will consider the appeal and decide to either uphold or overturn the original decision.
7. The CRG's Managing Editor will communicate the decision to the Contact Author, with copies to all co-authors.
8. Following the CRG's decision on an appeal, if the authors still disagree with the editorial decision, the authors or the CRG's editorial team may escalate the appeal to the Network Senior Editor. To consider the appeal, the Network Senior Editor will require:
  - a. The title, authors, and CD number of the Cochrane Review, protocol for a Cochrane Review, or update of a Cochrane Review.
  - b. Documented details of the editorial process (including the peer review reports and timelines) – if the case is submitted by the CRG.
  - c. The original editorial decision.
  - d. The original appeal submission by the authors.
  - e. The response to the appeal from the CRG.
  - f. The exact reasons why further consideration by the Network Senior Editor is required.
9. Receipt of an appeal submission will be acknowledged within 3 working days of receipt by the Network Senior Editor.
10. If possible, a definitive response will be made within two weeks. If this is not possible, an interim response will be given within two weeks. Further interim responses will be provided until the appeal is closed.
11. Details of all appeals escalated to the Network Senior Editor are considered confidential and will be documented.
12. Following the Network Senior Editor's decision, if the authors still disagree with the decision, the authors or the CRG's editorial team may escalate the appeal to the Editor in Chief. The Editor in Chief's decision is final and no further correspondence will be entered into.