

434/2003

Updated legislation

Updated regulatory texts, where changes made to the regulations are included in the regulatory text

Administrative law

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Legislative text [Change history](#)

In accordance with the decision of Parliament, it is provided that:

PART I GENERAL PROVISIONS

Chapter 1 Purpose and scope of the law

Section 1 Purpose of the law

The purpose of this Act is to implement and promote good administration and legal security in administrative matters. The purpose of the Act is also to promote the quality and effectiveness of administrative services.

Section 2 Scope of application

This Act provides for the principles of good administration and the procedure to be followed in administrative matters.

This Act applies to state authorities, authorities of welfare regions and welfare associations, municipal authorities, independent public law institutions, as well as parliamentary agencies and the Office of the President of the Republic (*authority*). ([29.6.2021/637](#)).

This Act applies to state enterprises, public law associations and private entities when they perform public administrative tasks.

Section 3 **Application to management contracts**

For the purposes of this Act, an administrative contract means a contract within the authority's jurisdiction for the performance of a public administrative task or a contract related to the exercise of public power.

When concluding a management agreement, the principles of good administration must be followed and the rights of those persons affected by the matter to be agreed upon must be adequately protected in the preparation of the agreement, as well as their opportunities to influence the content of the agreement.

Section 3a ([5.7.2019/809](#)) **Application to appeals**

If the law provides for an appeal to be filed with a body other than a court or a board established to handle appeals, the provisions of this Act concerning a claim for rectification shall apply to the handling of the appeal.

Section 4 **Scope limitations**

This Act does not apply to judicial administration, criminal investigation, police investigation or enforcement. The Act also does not apply to military orders or other internal administrative regulations concerning the performance of a task or other measure.

The provisions of this Act do not apply to the supervision of legality exercised by the supreme legality supervisors, unless otherwise provided for separately.

Paragraph 3 has been repealed by Act L. [9.5.2014/368](#).

Section 5 ([29.3.2019/432](#)) **Relationship to other legislation**

If other laws contain provisions that deviate from this Act, they shall apply in place of this Act.

The electronic initiation and processing of administrative matters and the ordinary and evidentiary electronic notification of decisions are regulated in the Act on Electronic Services in Public Authorities. ([13/2003](#)).

The procedure to be followed in administrative matters in the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Finland is regulated in the Church Act. ([1054/1993](#)).

Chapter 2

Fundamentals of good governance

Section 6

Administrative legal principles

The authority must treat those involved in the administration equally and use its powers exclusively for purposes permitted by law. The authority's actions must be impartial and proportionate to the aim pursued. They must protect legitimate expectations based on the legal order.

Section 7 ([9.5.2014/368](#))

Service principle and appropriateness of service

Efforts must be made to organize transactions and the processing of matters in the authority in such a way that the person dealing with the administration receives appropriate administrative services and the authority can perform its duties effectively.

The duty of authorities to provide information about their activities and services, as well as the rights and obligations of individuals and communities in matters related to their field of activity, is laid down in the Act on the Openness of Government Activities. ([621/1999](#)) [Section 20](#) In paragraph 2.

Section 8

Information

Within the limits of its competence, the authority must provide its clients with advice on the handling of administrative matters, as necessary, and answer questions and inquiries regarding transactions. The advice is free of charge.

If the matter is not within the authority's jurisdiction, it must try to direct the customer to the competent authority.

Section 9

The requirement for good language use

The authority must use objective, clear and understandable language.

The customer's right to use their own language when dealing with authorities is subject to what is specifically provided for or what results from international agreements binding on Finland.

Section 10

Cooperation between authorities

An authority must, within the limits of its competence and to the extent required by the matter, assist another authority at its request in carrying out an administrative task and otherwise strive to promote cooperation between authorities.

Separate provisions are made on administrative assistance between authorities.

Chapter 3

Status of interested parties and exercise of the right to speak

Section 11

Party concerned

In an administrative matter, a party is the person whose right, interest or obligation is affected by the matter.

Section 12

Attorney and assistant

An agent and an assistant may be used in an administrative matter. However, the principal must appear in person if this is necessary to clarify the matter. The agent must present a power of attorney or otherwise reliably demonstrate that he or she is entitled to represent the principal. The power of attorney must be specified by order of the authority if there is any ambiguity about the authority or scope of the authority. An attorney and a public legal advisor must present a power of attorney only if the authority so orders.

If an agent or assistant is unsuitable for his or her duties, the authority may prohibit him or her from appearing in the matter before that authority. The principal must be notified of the prohibition and given the opportunity to find a new agent or assistant.

A decision by an authority regarding a ban on appearance may be appealed separately by filing a complaint with the authority that has jurisdiction over the appeal of the decision in the matter. Otherwise, the provisions of the Act on Judicial Proceedings in Administrative Matters shall apply to the appeal. ([808/2019](#)) An appeal against a ban does not prevent the continuation of the case, unless the appeal authority determines otherwise. ([27.11.2020/854](#))

Section 13

Confidentiality of the agent and assistant

An agent or assistant may not unauthorizedly disclose confidential information entrusted to him or her by the principal for the purpose of handling the matter.

The Act on the Openness of Government Activities applies to the obligation of confidentiality and the prohibition of exploitation regarding information otherwise obtained by an agent or assistant for the performance of their duties. ([621/1999](#)) even when the information has been received from an authority other than the one handling the matter.

The provisions of subsections 1 and 2 also apply to the interpreter and translator used in the handling of the matter. The same applies to any other person who, by assignment or otherwise, participates in the handling of the principal's matter.

Section 14

The power of speech of the incompetent

The power to speak on behalf of a person with limited capacity is exercised by their guardian, custodian or other legal representative. However, the person with limited capacity has the right to speak alone in matters concerning their income or assets.

A minor who has reached the age of eighteen may exercise his or her right to speak alone in a matter concerning him or her, if he or she is able to understand the significance of the matter.

A minor who has reached the age of fifteen and his or her guardian or other legal representative each have the right to separately exercise the right to speak in a matter that concerns the minor's person or a personal interest or right.

Section 15

The right of the trustee to speak

A trustee appointed to a full-fledged person shall exercise independent speaking power in matters falling within his or her duties, in addition to his or her principal. If the trustee and his or her principal disagree when exercising speaking power, the principal's position shall be decisive, if he or she is able to understand the significance of the matter.

If the principal's capacity to act has been restricted in any way other than by being declared incompetent, the guardian alone exercises the principal's right to speak in a matter on which the principal does not have the right to decide. However, the guardian and his principal jointly exercise the right to speak in a matter on which they must decide together.

PART II

BRINGING AN ADMINISTRATIVE CASE AND PROCESSING THE CASE BY THE AUTHORITY

Chapter 4

Sending a document to an authority and initiating an administrative case

Section 16

Document content

The document submitted to the authority must state what the matter concerns. The document must include the name of the sender and the necessary contact information for handling the matter.

Section 17

Responsibility of the sender of the document

The document is delivered to the address of the competent authority in the matter at the sender's own risk. If a deadline has been set for the delivery of the document, the sender must ensure that the document reaches the authority within the deadline.

Upon request, the sender of the document must be provided with a certificate of registration or other recordation of the document.

Section 18

Document arrival date

A document is deemed to have been received by the authority on the day on which the document is submitted to the authority.

The date of arrival of a document sent by post is also considered to be the date on which the shipment has arrived at the authority's mailbox or the authority has been notified of the shipment's arrival at the postal company.

Section 19

Initiation of the case

The case is initiated in writing by stating the claims and their grounds. With the consent of the authority, the case may also be initiated orally.

Section 20

Initiation of the case

An administrative case is initiated when the document intended to initiate the case has arrived at the competent authority or when the case has been presented to it in connection with an oral initiation and the information necessary to initiate the proceedings has been recorded.

Section 21

Document transfer

An authority to which a document has been delivered in error for the purpose of handling a matter outside its jurisdiction shall immediately transfer the document to the authority it deems competent. The sender of the document shall be notified of the transfer.

When transferring a document, a decision not to investigate the matter is not required.

When transmitting a document that must be submitted to an authority within a time limit, the time limit is deemed to have been met if the competent authority receives the document within the time limit.

Section 22 Completing the document

If a document submitted to an authority is incomplete, the authority shall request the sender to complete the document within a specified period, unless this is unnecessary for resolving the matter. The sender of the document shall be informed of how the document must be completed.

A document received by an authority does not need to be supplemented with a signature if the document contains information about the sender and there is no reason to doubt the document's authenticity and integrity.

The party concerned may also, on their own initiative, supplement their application or other documents submitted for the processing of the matter and, during the processing, submit documents necessary for resolving the matter to the authority.

Chapter 5 General requirements for handling the case

Section 23 No delay in processing

The matter must be handled without undue delay.

The authority must, at the request of the party concerned, provide an estimate of the time when the decision was issued and respond to inquiries regarding the progress of the proceedings.

Section 23a ([9.5.2014/368](#)) Determining processing time

The authority must determine the expected processing time for matters to be resolved by administrative decision in the key subject areas of its field of activity, which can only be initiated

at the initiative of a party. This does not apply to matters for which a time limit has been set for processing.

Section 24 Publicity of the processing

The matter will be heard publicly if so provided or decided pursuant to a special provision.

The public access to documents and the right of access to information of interested parties are regulated in the Act on the Public Access to Government Activities.

Section 25 Dealing with things together

If a decision made by an authority may significantly affect the resolution of another matter pending at the same authority at the same time, the authority must prepare the matters together and resolve them at the same time, unless processing them together would cause harmful delay or unless it is unnecessary due to the quality or nature of the matter.

Section 26 Interpreting and translating

The authority must arrange interpretation and translation in a matter that may be initiated on the authority's initiative if:

- 1) the party concerned, who uses Romani or sign language or another language, does not know the Finnish or Swedish language used in the authority; or
- 2) The person concerned cannot be understood due to disability or illness.

The matter may be interpreted or translated into a language that the party concerned can be found to understand sufficiently, given the nature of the matter.

In order to clarify a matter or to safeguard the rights of a party, the authority may provide interpretation and translation in matters other than those referred to in subsection 1.

The Language Act provides for the right of users of Finnish and Swedish to interpretation and translation arranged by an authority. ([423/2003](#)). Interpretation and translation into the Sámi language are subject to separate provisions. The authority must also ensure that citizens of other Nordic countries receive the necessary interpretation and translation assistance in matters handled by it.

Section 27 Disqualification

An official may not participate in the handling of a matter or be present when it is handled if he or she is disqualified.

The provisions on the disqualification of a public official also apply to members of a multi-member body and other persons participating in the handling of the matter and to inspectors carrying out the inspection.

Section 28

Eligibility criteria

An official is disqualified:

- 1) if he or his loved one is a party to the case;
- 2) if he or his close relative assists or represents a party to the case or a person for whom a particular benefit or harm is expected from the resolution of the case;
- 3) if the resolution of the matter is expected to bring special benefit or harm to him or his close relative referred to in subsection 2, paragraph 1;
- 4) if he/she is in an employment relationship or an assignment relationship related to the matter being handled with a party to the case or a person for whom a particular benefit or harm is expected from the resolution of the matter;
- 5) if he or his close relative referred to in subsection 2, paragraph 1, is a member of the board of directors, supervisory board or equivalent body, or a managing director or equivalent position in a corporation, foundation, state enterprise or institution that is a party to the case or that is expected to benefit or suffer special damage from the resolution of the matter;
- 6) if he or his close relative referred to in paragraph 2, paragraph 1, is a member of the board of directors of an agency or institution or a comparable body and the matter in question is related to the management or supervision of that agency or institution; or
- 7) if confidence in his impartiality is compromised for another specific reason.

In subsection 1, a close relative means:

- 1) the civil servant's spouse and the civil servant's child, grandchild, sibling, parent, grandparent and other persons particularly close to the civil servant, as well as the spouse of such a person;
- 2) the civil servant's parents' siblings and their spouses, the civil servant's siblings' children and the civil servant's former spouse; and

3) the child, grandchild, sibling, parent and grandparent of the civil servant's spouse, as well as the spouse of such a person and the children of the civil servant's spouse's siblings.

A corresponding half-relative is also considered close. Spouses refer to married couples and persons living in marriage-like circumstances and registered partnerships.

Section 29

Resolving ineligibility

The issue of a civil servant's disqualification must be resolved without delay.

The official himself decides on the question of his disqualification. However, the institution decides on the disqualification of a member and rapporteur of a multi-member institution. The multi-member institution also decides on the disqualification of another person entitled to be present. A member or rapporteur may participate in the consideration of a matter concerning his disqualification only if the institution would not have a quorum without him and no person without disqualification is available to replace him without significant delay.

A decision regarding disqualification may not be subject to separate rectification or amendment by appeal.

Section 30

Continuation of the case

A disqualified official must be replaced without delay by an undisqualified official. However, the official may handle an urgent matter, the resolution of which cannot be affected by the disqualification.

Chapter 6

Investigating the matter and hearing the party concerned

Section 31

Duty to investigate

The authority must ensure that the matter is adequately and appropriately investigated by obtaining the information and explanations necessary to resolve the matter.

The party concerned must present an explanation of the grounds for their claim. The party concerned must also otherwise contribute to the investigation of the matter they have initiated.

Section 32

Request for clarification

A request for a statement or other explanation must specify the specific matters on which an explanation must be provided.

Section 33

Deadline for submitting the report

A sufficient time limit must be set for supplementing the document, providing an explanation and presenting a report, considering the nature of the matter.

The party concerned must be informed that failure to comply with the deadline will not prevent the matter from being resolved. The deadline may be extended at the request of the party concerned if it is necessary to resolve the matter.

Section 34

Hearing of the interested party

Before the matter is resolved, the party concerned must be given an opportunity to express his or her opinion on the matter and to provide explanations regarding any demands and explanations that may affect the resolution of the matter.

A matter may be resolved without hearing the parties if:

- 1) the claim is dismissed or immediately rejected as unfounded;
- 2) the matter concerns admission to employment or voluntary training;
- 3) the matter concerns the granting of a benefit based on an assessment of the applicant's characteristics;
- 4) the hearing may jeopardise the achievement of the purpose of the decision or the delay in the processing of the matter caused by the hearing will cause significant harm to human health, public safety or the environment; or
- 5) a claim is accepted that does not concern the other party or a hearing is clearly unnecessary for another reason.

Section 35

Hearing the principal and the guardian or custodian

When a guardian, custodian or other legal representative exercises the right to speak, his or her principal must be heard, and correspondingly, when a principal exercises the right to speak, the guardian, custodian or other legal representative must be heard, if the hearing is necessary in the interests of the principal or to clarify the matter.

Section 36

Notification of hearing

The interested party shall be informed of the purpose of the hearing and the time limit set for providing an explanation. The request for a hearing shall, where necessary, specify the matters on which an explanation is requested. The interested party shall be provided with the documents subject to the hearing in originals or copies or otherwise be given the opportunity to examine them.

Section 37 Oral claim and explanation

Upon request, the authority shall reserve the opportunity for the party concerned to present a claim or explanation orally if this is necessary for the investigation of the matter and written proceedings would cause unreasonable difficulties for the party concerned. Other parties concerned shall be summoned to appear simultaneously if this is necessary to protect the rights or interests of the parties concerned.

At the request of a party concerned, the authority may reserve an opportunity for the oral presentation of information necessary to clarify the matter in situations other than those referred to in subsection 1.

Section 38 Review

The authority may conduct a review if it is necessary to clarify the matter. The interested party must be given the opportunity to be present at the review and express his or her opinion on the matters raised. If the nature of the matter so requires, an authority whose duties include supervising the relevant activity according to law or whose expertise is needed to resolve the matter must also be invited to the review. The review must be conducted without causing unreasonable harm to the subject of the review or its holder.

Minutes must be kept of the review, which must include the key observations made by the authority and the comments submitted by the party concerned. The minutes must be promptly served on the party concerned and on others invited to the hearing.

The inspection is public. The authority may restrict public access to the inspection if this is necessary due to the nature of the matter or the nature of the activity being inspected. The inspection may not be conducted in premises subject to domestic peace, unless otherwise specifically provided for by law.

Section 39 Inspection

The authority shall notify the party directly affected by the matter of the commencement of an inspection within its jurisdiction, unless notification would jeopardise the achievement of the purpose of the inspection. The party referred to above has the right to be present at the inspection and to express their opinions and questions on matters related to the inspection. During the inspection, the party concerned shall, if possible, be informed of the objectives of the inspection, its conduct and follow-up measures. The inspection shall be carried out without causing unreasonable inconvenience to the subject of the inspection or its holder.

The inspector must immediately prepare a written inspection report on the inspection, which must state the course of the inspection and the key observations made by the inspector. The inspection report must be served on the interested party entitled to be present at the inspection.

Section 40 ([26.6.2015/801](#)) **Oral evidence**

For a special reason, a witness may be heard in an administrative matter by means of an affidavit and a party may be heard orally. Parties who are directly affected by the decision to be made in the matter must be given the opportunity to be present when the witness or party is heard. Parties have the right to ask questions of the person being heard and to express their views on the report of the person being heard.

Official assistance for the use of oral evidence is provided by the administrative court where the hearing of the witness or party can most appropriately take place. In an administrative justice matter being handled by a court, the hearing is conducted by the relevant court.

The provisions of the Act on Judicial Procedure in Administrative Matters apply to the disqualification of a witness and the right of a witness to refuse to testify. ([27.11.2020/854](#))

Section 41 **Booking opportunities for influence**

If the resolution of the matter may have a significant impact on the living environment, work or other conditions of persons other than the parties concerned, the authority must provide these persons with the opportunity to obtain information about the starting points and objectives of the case and to express their opinion on the matter.

The pending status of a matter and the exercise of opportunities to influence must be announced in a manner appropriate to the significance and scope of the matter.

However, it is not necessary to notify the pending case if it jeopardizes the realization of the purpose of the decision or causes other significant harm, or if it is clearly unnecessary.

Section 42 ([8.5.2020/331](#))

Data logging

Information about verbal demands and explanations that may affect the resolution of the case must be recorded or otherwise registered. The same applies to information obtained from the personal register.

Chapter 7 Resolving the matter

Section 43 ([11.6.2010/581](#)) Form of decision

The administrative decision must be given in writing.

The decision may be given orally if necessary due to the urgency of the matter.

The oral decision must also be given in writing without delay, together with instructions for making a claim for rectification or appeal. The time limit for making a claim for rectification or appealing begins upon receipt of the written decision, as separately provided for.

Section 44 Content of the decision

The written decision must clearly state:

- 1) the authority that made the decision and the date on which the decision was made;
- 2) the parties directly affected by the decision;
- 3) the reasons for the decision and specific information about what the party concerned is entitled to or obliged to do or how the matter has otherwise been resolved; and
- 4) the name and contact information of the person from whom the interested party can request additional information about the decision, if necessary.

When issuing an oral decision, the party concerned must be informed of how the matter has been resolved and the reasons for the decision must be explained.

Section 45 Justification of the decision

The decision must be justified. The justification must state which factors and explanations have influenced the decision and mention the provisions applied.

The reasons for the decision may not be provided if:

- 1) an important public or private interest requires the immediate adoption of the decision;
- 2) the decision concerns an election conducted by a welfare region or welfare association or a municipal multi-member body; ([29.6.2021/637](#))
- 3) the decision concerns admission to voluntary training or granting of a benefit based on an assessment of the applicant's characteristics;
- 4) the decision approves a claim that does not concern the other party and the others do not have the right to appeal the decision; or
- 5) justification is obviously unnecessary for another specific reason.

However, in the situations referred to in subsection 2, justifications must be provided if the decision constitutes a substantial change to established practice.

Section 46 ([11.6.2010/581](#)) **Instructions for rectification claims**

If a decision must be subject to a request for rectification in a separately prescribed rectification procedure before an appeal can be filed, instructions on how to exercise such a remedy must be issued simultaneously with the decision.

Instructions for requesting a correction must also be issued when separate provisions have been made regarding submitting an administrative decision to an authority for processing as a matter other than an appeal.

The content of the instructions for a claim for rectification is governed by the provisions of sections 47 and 49 concerning the appeal notice.

Section 47 **Appeal address**

A decision that may be appealed must be accompanied by a notice of appeal. It must state:

- 1) appeal authority;
- 2) the authority to which the appeal must be submitted; and
- 3) the appeal period and how it is calculated.

The appeal notice must explain the provisions on the content of the appeal, its attachments, the delivery of the appeal, and the fees charged for handling the appeal. ([5.7.2019/809](#))

Section 48 **Notice of prohibition of appeal and inadmissibility of appeal**

If an appeal is prohibited under a special provision or the decision is not appealable, the decision must include a statement of the provision under which an appeal is not possible.

Section 49 **Correcting the appeal address**

If no appeal instructions have been issued or the decision incorrectly states that it cannot be appealed, the authority must issue a new, legally valid appeal instruction.

If the appeal notice is incorrect, the authority must issue a new appeal notice if requested within the appeal period specified or stipulated in the appeal notice.

The appeal period begins to run from the date of service of the new appeal notice.

Chapter 7a ([11.6.2010/581](#)) **Claim procedure**

Section 49a ([11.6.2010/581](#)) **Application of the provisions of this chapter and relationship to other legislation**

This chapter provides for the procedure for handling a request for rectification. The provisions also apply if a matter decided by an official must be submitted to the relevant authority for consideration before an appeal can be lodged.

Unless otherwise provided in this chapter or elsewhere, this Act shall apply to the processing of a claim for rectification.

Section 49b ([7.8.2015/893](#)) **Filing a claim for rectification and prohibition of appeal**

The law specifically stipulates if a correction may be requested for a decision. In such cases, the decision may not be appealed.

A person to whom the decision is addressed or whose right, obligation or interest is directly affected by the decision may request a correction. An authority may also request a correction if the law so provides or if the right of appeal is necessary for the public interest that the authority is overseeing.

When applying for an appeal against a decision on a claim for rectification, the provisions of the Act on Judicial Proceedings in Administrative Matters apply, unless otherwise provided in another law. ([27.11.2020/854](#))

Section 49c ([11.6.2010/581](#)) **Rectification period**

The request for rectification must be made within 30 days of receiving notification of the decision.

If the claim for rectification is not submitted within the deadline, the claim for rectification will be dismissed.

Section 49d ([7.8.2015/893](#)) Form and content of the claim for rectification

The request for rectification must be made in writing to the authority or other person performing a public administrative function that made the decision. The request for rectification must state the decision for which rectification is requested, as well as the type of rectification requested and the grounds on which it is requested.

Section 49e ([11.6.2010/581](#)) Urgency of processing

The request for rectification must be processed urgently.

Section 49f ([7.8.2015/893](#)) Enforceability of the decision

A decision that may be subject to a request for rectification may not be implemented until it has become final.

However, a decision may be enforced without legal force if the law so provides or if the nature of the decision is such that it must be enforced immediately, or if the enforcement of the decision cannot be postponed for reasons of public interest.

Once a claim for rectification has been filed, the authority handling the claim for rectification may prohibit the enforcement of the decision or order its suspension. A separate appeal may not be filed against a decision in a matter of prohibiting or suspending enforcement.

Section 49g ([11.6.2010/581](#)) Resolving a claim for rectification and correcting the error

After examining the appeal, the authority may amend the administrative decision, annul the decision or reject the appeal. The appeal decision must provide a reasoned solution to the claims presented in the appeal. Section 45, subsection 2, does not apply to the justification of the appeal decision.

The authority deciding on the claim for rectification may, in the same context and without a separate claim, also make a decision on the correction of the error as provided in sections 50–53.

Chapter 8

Correcting an error in a decision

Section 50 ([11.6.2010/581](#))

Correcting a factual error

The authority may revoke its incorrect decision and decide the matter again if:

- 1) the decision is based on a clearly incorrect or incomplete investigation;
- 2) the decision is based on a manifestly incorrect application of the law;
- 3) a procedural error occurred in making the decision; or
- 4) New information has become available that may significantly affect the decision.

A decision may be corrected in the situation referred to in subsection 1, paragraphs 1–3, to the advantage or detriment of the party concerned. Correcting a decision to the disadvantage of the party concerned requires that the party concerned consent to the correction of the decision. However, the party concerned's consent is not required if the error is obvious and has been caused by the party concerned's own conduct. A decision may be corrected in the situation referred to in subsection 1, paragraph 4, only to the advantage of the party concerned.

Section 51

Correcting a typo

The authority must correct any obvious typographical or calculation error or other comparable obvious error in its decision.

However, an error may not be corrected if the correction would lead to an unreasonable result for the party concerned and the error was not caused by the party concerned's own conduct.

Section 52

Initiation and processing of a correction case

The authority shall handle the matter of rectification on its own initiative or at the request of the party concerned. The initiative must be taken or the request for rectification must be submitted within five years of the decision being made.

Correction of a factual error requires that the matter be re-handled and a new decision issued. A clerical error is corrected by replacing the delivery note containing the error with a corrected delivery note. The party concerned must be given an opportunity to be heard before the clerical error is corrected, unless it is unnecessary.

The correction of a factual or clerical error must be noted on the original decision or in the information system used by the authority. A new or corrected delivery note must be given to the party concerned free of charge.

Section 53

Supplementary provisions on the rectification procedure

When processing the correction of a factual or clerical error, the authority may prohibit the enforcement of the decision for the time being or order it to be suspended.

If a correction or amendment has been applied for in relation to the decision to be corrected, or if a separately prescribed procedure is pending, the acceptance of the correction matter must be notified and the decision made in it must be submitted to this authority. The processing of the correction matter does not affect the expiry of the appeal period or other time limits.

A decision by which an authority has rejected a request to correct an error may not be appealed.

Chapter 8a ([9.5.2014/368](#))

Administrative complaint

Section 53a ([9.5.2014/368](#))

Filing an administrative complaint

Anyone can file an administrative complaint with the authority supervising the activities of an authority, a person in its service or another person performing a public administrative task, regarding an unlawful act or failure to fulfill an obligation.

An administrative complaint shall be made in writing. With the consent of the supervisory authority, the complaint may be made orally. The complainant shall state his/her understanding of the grounds on which he/she considers the procedure to be incorrect and, if possible, information on the date of the procedure or omission that is the subject of criticism.

Section 53b ([9.5.2014/368](#))

Handling of administrative complaints

The supervisory authority shall take such measures as it deems appropriate based on the administrative complaint. If there is no reason to take measures based on the complaint, the complainant shall be notified thereof without delay.

When handling an administrative complaint, the principles of good administration must be followed and the rights of those directly affected by the matter must be safeguarded.

An administrative complaint filed about a matter more than two years old will not be investigated unless there is a special reason for it.

The provisions of this Act apply to the decision given in a complaint case and its notification.

Section 53c ([9.5.2014/368](#))

Administrative guidance given in response to an administrative complaint

In its decision on an administrative complaint, the supervisory authority may draw the attention of the supervised party to the requirements of good administration or inform the supervised party of its understanding of the procedure in accordance with the law. If this is not considered sufficient, taking into account the factors affecting the overall assessment of the case, the supervised party may be given a warning, unless the nature or seriousness of the act that is the subject of the complaint does not justify taking measures to initiate a procedure provided for in another law. In the latter case, the complaint shall be dismissed.

Section 53d ([9.5.2014/368](#))

Ban on appeal

The decision given in an administrative complaint cannot be appealed.

Chapter 8b ([23.3.2023/487](#))

Automatically resolve the issue

Section 53e ([23.3.2023/487](#))

Prerequisites for automatic resolution of a case

This chapter provides for the conditions that must be met, in addition to those provided for elsewhere in the law, in order for an authority to make a decision concluding a case by automatic data processing without the decision being reviewed and approved by a natural person.

An authority may automatically resolve a matter that does not include matters that require case-specific consideration, or that includes matters that require case-specific consideration that have been assessed by an official or other person handling the matter. The resolution must be based on the applicable law and the provisions of the Act on Information Management in Public Administration drawn up on the basis of prior consideration.

[\(906/2019\) Section 2](#) to the processing rules referred to in paragraph 16.

The conditions for the introduction of automated decision-making and the procedure to be followed in the introduction are laid down in the Act on Information Management in Public Administration.

A claim for rectification or a similar claim cannot be resolved automatically.

Section 53f ([23.3.2023/487](#))

Legal protection requirement for automatic resolution

A prerequisite for automatic resolution is that the natural person to whom the decision has been addressed can demand a correction in all respects free of charge by means of a request for correction pursuant to Chapter 7a or an equivalent request, which is processed by the authority that made the decision or by an authority belonging to the same controller as it.

However, the provisions of subsection 1 do not apply if an automatic decision approves a claim of a party that does not concern another party.

Section 53g ([23.3.2023/487](#))

Notification of automatic resolution

In addition to what is provided for in section 44(1), the administrative decision must state if the matter has been resolved automatically, as well as information on where the implementation decision referred to in section 28 d of the Act on Information Management in Public Administration is available.

If an administrative decision is not issued in the matter on the basis of another law, the information referred to in subsection 1 and information on the information that forms the basis for the automatic decision must, however, be provided to the party concerned in another way no later than when the case is concluded.

The requirement to provide the name of the person providing additional information, as provided for in section 44(1)(4), does not apply to a matter that has been resolved automatically.

PART III

NOTIFICATION OF ADMINISTRATIVE DECISIONS AND OTHER DOCUMENTS

Chapter 9

General provisions on service

Section 54

Duty to notify

The authority must immediately notify the party concerned and any other person known to have the right to seek rectification or amendment of the decision by appeal. The authority must also notify any decision that is subject to a prohibition on appeal.

During the processing of the matter, the authority must ensure that a notice, summons or other document affecting the processing of the matter is served.

The document shall be served in the original or as a copy. If the document to be served includes documents accumulated during the handling of the matter that cannot be handed over to the recipient, the authority shall provide the recipient with an opportunity to inspect the documents at the authority's or bailiff's premises. The place and duration of the documents to be displayed shall be stated in connection with the service.

Section 55 Methods of notification

Service shall be delivered as ordinary or evidentiary service or, if it cannot be delivered in the manner referred to above, as general service.

General service can also be used when a document needs to be served on more than thirty known persons or when the number of persons is unknown.

Section 56 Service to a private individual

Notification to a private individual shall be delivered to the individual or to their legal representative. If the recipient of the notification and their representative both have the right to speak in the matter, notification shall be delivered to each separately.

In a matter that concerns two or more parties jointly, notification shall be delivered to the contact person indicated in the joint document. If no contact person has been indicated, notification shall be delivered to the first signatory of the document. The recipient shall inform the other signatories of receipt of notification.

The notification shall be delivered to a person authorized by the party concerned, unless the person's right to receive notifications has been specifically restricted or the notification must be delivered to the party concerned personally. The authorized person shall be notified of the notification delivered to the principal.

Section 57 Notification to a corporation, foundation, estate and bankruptcy estate

Ordinary service on a corporation or foundation is delivered to the address provided by it. Certified service on a corporation or foundation is delivered to a person who is entitled to receive service on its behalf.

Notification of the estate shall be delivered to the shareholder in possession of the estate or to the administrator of the estate. If the estate is under joint administration by several shareholders, notification may be delivered to one of them. The shareholder must notify the other shareholders of the receipt of the notification.

The notification to the bankruptcy estate is delivered to the administrator of the estate.

Section 58 ([22.12.2009/1408](#)) **Notification to the authority**

The notification shall be delivered to the authority that exercises the power of representation in the matter. If there is uncertainty about the state authority that exercises the power of representation, the notification shall be delivered to the Regional State Administrative Agency.

A certified notification to a welfare area shall be delivered to the director of the welfare area or the chairman of the institution exercising the authority of the welfare area in the matter. A certified notification to a municipality shall be delivered to the mayor of the municipality or the chairman of the institution exercising the authority of the municipality in the matter.

Notification may also be delivered to another person who is authorized to receive notifications on behalf of the director of the welfare area or the mayor of the municipality or the chairman of the institution. ([29.6.2021/637](#))

The provisions above regarding service on a private individual shall apply to service on a private individual performing a public administrative task.

Chapter 10 **Procedure to be followed in notification**

Section 59 **Ordinary service**

Ordinary service is delivered by post, by letter, to the recipient.

The recipient is deemed to have been informed of the matter on the seventh day after the letter was sent, unless otherwise proven. However, the matter is deemed to have come to the attention of the authority on the day the letter arrives.

Section 60 **Evidential service**

Notification must be sent by post against a receipt if it concerns a binding decision, the notice of which starts the period for appealing or another period affecting the recipient's rights. A receipt may also be used if it is otherwise necessary to safeguard the rights of the party concerned. The receipt must indicate the sender and recipient of the notification and the time of notification.

The document may also be handed over to the recipient of the service or their representative. In such cases, a written certificate must be drawn up of the service, indicating the person who served the service, the recipient of the service and the time of service.

If the authority deems it appropriate, the notification may be served as a summons. The summons shall apply, where applicable, to the extent that it is [in chapter 11 of the Code of Judicial Procedure](#) A summons may also be served by a civil servant or office holder employed by a state, welfare region or municipal authority who is entitled by a separate order to serve summons in a matter falling within the authority's jurisdiction. The disqualification of the person serving the summons shall be subject to the provisions of this Act on disqualification. [\(29.6.2021/637\)](#)

Section 61 **Substitute notification**

If the recipient of the evidentiary service or their representative cannot be reached, the document may be delivered in a closed letter with consent:

- 1) to a person over the age of fifteen living in the same household as the recipient;
- 2) to the recipient's employer or the employer's representative;
- 3) if the recipient carries on a business through a permanent establishment, to a person employed by that enterprise; or
- 4) to an employee employed by the recipient organization or foundation.

A written certificate must be drawn up of the substitute service, indicating the person who served the document, the person to whom the document was delivered, and the date of service. A copy of the certificate of service must be sent to the recipient of the service without delay.

Service shall be deemed to have taken place on the third day from the date indicated on the certificate of service of substitute service. Substitute service may not be effected unless the addressee of the service can be expected to receive the document within a reasonable time.

Section 62 [\(29.3.2019/432\)](#) **General notification**

In a general notification, the document is kept available for the recipient to view at the authority for a specified period of time.

The publication of the document shall be announced on the public information network on the authority's website and, if necessary, in a newspaper from which the recipient can be expected to receive the information best. If the announcement cannot be published on the authority's website due to communication failures or other comparable reasons, the publication of the document shall also be announced in the Official Gazette.

The notice must state what the matter concerns and state where and until what time the document will be available for inspection. The notice must also state the date on which it was published on the authority's website and state that service is deemed to have taken place on the seventh day from that date of publication. If the notice could not be published on the authority's website, the notice must state that service was taken on the seventh day from the date of publication of the notice in the Official Gazette.

Section 62a ([29.3.2019/432](#)) Public announcement

If, under other law, a document must be served by public notice, service shall be effected by publishing the notice and the document to be served on the public information network on the website of the authority. If necessary, the notice shall also be published in a newspaper in the area of influence of the matter or in another manner decided by the authority. If the notice cannot be published on the website of the authority due to telecommunications problems or other comparable reason, it shall also be published in the Official Gazette.

The notice and the document to be announced must be kept publicly available on the public information network on the authority's website for 14 days. If the appeal period or other time limit affecting the recipient's rights begins to expire after the document is served, the notice and the document to be announced must be kept publicly available until the end of the said time limit.

The notice must state what the matter concerns and state where and until what time the document will be available for inspection. The notice must also state the date on which it was published on the authority's website and state that service is deemed to have taken place on the seventh day from that date of publication. If the notice could not be published on the authority's website, the notice must state that service was taken on the seventh day from the date of publication of the notice in the Official Gazette.

Section 62b ([29.3.2019/432](#)) Publication of information when submitting a general notification and public announcement

The information in the notice of the disclosure of a document, the public announcement and the document to be disclosed may be published, unless otherwise provided for by the provisions on confidentiality. However, only the personal data necessary for obtaining information shall be published and may be published notwithstanding the provisions of section 16, subsection 3 of the Act on the Openness of Government Activities. The personal data contained in the notice of the disclosure of a document, the public announcement and the document to be disclosed shall be removed from the public information network on the authority's website after the period of disclosure referred to in section 62, subsection 3 and section 62a, subsection 2 above.

Section 63

Service abroad

Service shall be delivered abroad in accordance with this Act or the legislation of the relevant foreign state, unless otherwise provided for by international agreements and obligations binding on Finland.

If service intended for foreign countries cannot be delivered, the document will be served in Finland by general service.

PART IV

VARIOUS PROVISIONS AND ENTRY INTO FORCE

Chapter 11

Miscellaneous provisions

Section 64

Administrative costs and costs of evidence

In administrative matters, each party is responsible for its own expenses.

Separate provisions are made on the fees for administrative decisions and the costs incurred in their notification. Legal aid granted from state funds is provided for in the Legal Aid Act. ([257/2002](#)).

The witness shall be compensated in accordance with, where applicable, the provisions of the Act on Evidence Costs Paid from State Funds. ([666/1972](#)) The compensation shall be paid from the funds available to the authority. If there is reason to do so, the authority may oblige the party concerned to reimburse it in whole or in part from these funds.

Section 65

Interpreter and translator disqualification

A person may not be used as an interpreter or translator if he or she has such a relationship with the party concerned or the matter that his or her reliability may be compromised for this reason.

Section 66 ([27.11.2020/854](#))

Dispute regarding the management agreement

A dispute concerning an administrative agreement is handled as an administrative dispute in the administrative court. The procedure in an administrative dispute is provided for in the Act on Judicial Proceedings in Administrative Matters.

Section 67

Administrative sanctions

The authority may enforce a prohibition, obligation or requirement it has issued with a threat of a fine, a threat of having the work carried out, a threat of suspension or another administrative sanction as separately provided.

Section 68

Liability for damages for failure to forward notification

The person obliged to notify referred to in Section 56, subsection 2, and Section 57, subsection 2, and the recipient of substitute notification referred to in Section 61, subsection 1, are liable to compensate for the damage caused by the failure to notify or the failure to deliver the document or its delay, to the extent that it is considered reasonable in view of the nature of the negligence and other circumstances.

The authority must attach to the document to be served a notice of the recipient's obligation to deliver or to notify referred to in subsection 1 above, and of the liability for damages related to its neglect.

Section 69

Violation of the confidentiality obligation of an agent and assistant

The penalty for violating the confidentiality obligation laid down in Section 13 is a fine of [\(39/1889\) 38th chapter](#) According to Section 1 or 2, unless the act is punishable [Chapter 40, Section 5 of the Criminal Code](#) or where a more severe penalty is provided for elsewhere in the law.

Chapter 12

Entry into force and transitional provisions

Section 70

Passage

This Act shall enter into force on 1 January 2004.

This Act repeals, with subsequent amendments:

- 1) Administrative Procedure Act of 6 August 1982 ([598/1982](#)) ;
- 2) Act of 26 February 1954 on the transmission of documents ([74/1954](#)) and
- 3) Act of 15 April 1966 on service of documents in administrative matters ([232/1966](#)) .

Section 71

Transitional provisions

Administrative matters initiated before the entry into force of this Act shall be subject to the provisions in force at the time of the entry into force of this Act. However, the provisions of this Act shall be subject to matters returned for new consideration. This Act shall apply to administrative agreements concluded after the entry into force of this Act.

A reference in another act or regulation to the Administrative Procedure Act, the Act on the Transmission of Documents or the Act on Service in Administrative Matters shall, after the entry into force of this Act, mean a reference to this Act.

Before this Act enters into force, measures required for its implementation may be taken.

[HE 72/2002](#)

HaVM 29/2002

Government Decree 289/2002

Entry into force and application of amending regulations

[22.12.2009/1408:](#) >

This Act enters into force on 1 January 2010.

Before this Act enters into force, measures required for its implementation may be taken.

[HE 161/2009](#) , HaVM 18/2009, EV 205/2009

[11.6.2010/581:](#) >

This Act shall enter into force on 1 August 2010.

Before this Act enters into force, measures required for its implementation may be taken.

[HE 226/2009](#) , Ministry of Agriculture 3/2010, Government Gazette 54/2010

[9.5.2014/368:](#) >

This Act enters into force on 1 September 2014.

[HE 50/2013](#) , HaVM 6/2014, EV 24/2014

[26.6.2015/801:](#) >

This Act enters into force on 1 January 2016.

[HE 245/2014](#) , LaVM 23/2014, EV 296/2014

[7.8.2015/893:](#) >

This Act enters into force on 1 January 2016.

In an appeal, the provisions in force when this Act entered into force shall apply to an administrative decision issued before the entry into force of this Act.

[HE 230/2014](#) , LaVM 26/2014, EV 319/2014

[29.3.2019/432:](#) >

This law will enter into force on 1 January 2020.

[HE 239/2018](#) , HaVM 29/2018, EV 247/2018

[5.7.2019/809:](#) >

This law will enter into force on 1 January 2020.

The provisions in force at the time of entry into force of this Act shall apply to the handling of an appeal pending before a court or a board established to handle appeals matters when this Act enters into force. However, this Act shall apply to the notice of appeal attached to a decision given in such a matter.

[HE 29/2018](#) , LaVM 18/2018, EV 295/2018

[8.5.2020/331:](#) >

This Act enters into force on 1 June 2020.

[HE 2/2020](#) , LaVM 2/2020, EV 24/2020

[27.11.2020/854:](#) >

This Act enters into force on 1 December 2020.

[HE 109/2020](#) , LaVM 10/2020, EV 136/2020

[29.6.2021/637:](#) >

This Act enters into force on 1 July 2021.

[HE 241/2020](#) , StVM 16/2021, EV 111/2021

[23.3.2023/487: >](#)

This Act shall enter into force on 1 May 2023.

The automatic resolution of a matter in use before the entry into force of this Act may be continued for 18 months from the entry into force of this Act, notwithstanding the provisions of Section 53e, subsection 4, and Section 53f.

The automatic resolution of a matter in use before the entry into force of this Act must be brought into line with Section 53g within 18 months of the entry into force of this Act.

[HE 145/2022](#) , HaVM 39/2022, EV 303/2022