

Have Your Say!

How to complain about Adult Social Care and Social Work Services





This policy sets out how Adult Social Care and Social Work Services will handle complaints and reflects our commitment to provide service users and those acting on their behalf with a transparent, accessible and effective process for dealing with complaints.

Adult Social Care is committed to providing complainants with the opportunity to raise concerns and make a complaint about the services it provides. We view complaints positively and are committed to have in place an effective complaints procedure to handle all issues brought to the attention of staff.

We are constantly seeking to improve the standard and quality of our services and recognise that complaints are an opportunity from which we can learn. It is important to us that people feel satisfied with the service provided. We will treat complaints seriously, giving individual attention to every one received.

All complaints will be properly investigated in an open and transparent manner and the outcome of the investigation will be explained to the complainant along with any actions that are taken in light of the complaint. You will not be discriminated against as a result of making a complaint.

Complaint Handling Procedure

The aim of the procedure is to put things right where they have gone wrong and wherever possible use outcomes to inform service improvements. We aim to:

- Ensure that staff and complainants are provided with support and the necessary guidance throughout the complaints process
- Ensure responses are provided to complainants in appropriate timeframes
- Provide clear, simple, easy to understand procedures for managing complaints which are widely publicised and accessible.

What is a complaint?

We regard a complaint as any expression of dissatisfaction about our action or lack of action, or about the standard of service provided by us or on our behalf.

You can complain about things like

- Failure or refusal to provide a service
- Inadequate quality or standard of service, or unreasonable delay in providing a service
- Dissatisfaction with one of our policies
- Failure to properly apply law, procedure or guidance when delivering services
- Dissatisfaction about withdrawal of a service
- Conduct or treatment by a member of staff

Our Key Principles are that our process will:

- Be quick and simple
- Be objective and transparent
- Seek early resolution
- Deliver improvement
- Be user focused
- Be accessible

What isn't a complaint?

Some things we can't deal with through our complaints procedure. These include:

- A first-time request for a service
- A request for compensation
- Disagreement with decisions made by a court or a statutory body, such as a Mental Health Tribunal or Parole Board
- A concern about a person's safety

Who can complain?

Anyone who receives, requests, or is affected by our social work services can make a complaint. This is not restricted to 'service users' or those who can act on their behalf, but may also include people who come into contact with or are affected by these services.

How long do I have to make a complaint?

You can make a complaint up to 6 months from when you first knew of the problem. In exceptional circumstances we may accept a complaint after this time limit but no more than 12 months from when you first knew of the issue.

What to do if you want to make a complaint

In the first instance, you should speak to the member of staff working with you.

Very often problems arise through a simple mistake and talking about them can be enough to sort things out. It is particularly important that staff have the opportunity to deal with issues raised in the first instance.

Stage 1: Frontline

Stage 1 complaints are straightforward matters that require little or no investigation, and we aim to respond to complaints quickly. This could mean an on-the-spot apology if something has gone wrong, or immediate action to resolve the problem.

We will respond within 5 working days, unless there are exceptional circumstances.

If you are not satisfied, you can escalate your complaint to Stage 2.

Stage 2: Investigation

This stage is for more complicated issues that require an in-depth investigation, or if you are unhappy with how we deal with your Stage 1 complaint.

We will acknowledge receipt within 3 working days. You will receive a full written response from the Service Manager or Chief Officer within 20 working days. As investigations can be very detailed, we may need more time and if this happens, we will let you know.

An investigation aims to establish all the facts relevant to the points made in the complaint and to give a full, objective and proportionate response that represents our final position.

When we reply to your complaint, we will let you know the outcome and any changes made as a result of your complaint.

How to complain

You can submit a complaint online via www.aberdeencity.gov.uk/socialworkcomplaints

You can also make a complaint in person at any council office, or by contacting our Customer Feedback Team by telephone or writing:

Customer Feedback Team
Business Hub 6
First Floor South
Marischal College
Broad Street
Aberdeen
AB10 1AB

01224 325058

Provide the following:

- Your name and contact details
- what happened and when
- who was involved
- what you feel should have happened instead
- what you would like to happen as a result of your complaint

Getting help to complain

You may be reluctant or unable to make a complaint yourself, you can ask a friend, relative or advocate to do this for you. Your allocated worker can also help.

You must give permission for someone to act on your behalf. You can give permission by completing a Third-Party Consent to Disclose mandate.

We will consider any Guardianship or Power of Attorney in place when deciding whether it is necessary for a mandate.

What to do if you remain dissatisfied

The Scottish Public Services Ombudsman (SPSO) is an independent body who can review the complaints made to us. If you are unhappy with our response to your Stage 2 complaint, the SPSO can help.

You can contact them for advice and they may investigate the issue to see if we could have done things differently. They may suggest improvements or give us advice on how we could do better.

If you haven't completed both stages of the complaints procedure, the ombudsman may ask you to do this before they get involved.

Care Inspectorate

If your complaint relates to a care service we provide, you can complain to the Care Inspectorate.

For more information, visit the Care Inspectorate website www.careinspectorate.com

Alternatively, contact them using the details below:

Care Inspectorate
48 Huntly Street
Aberdeen
AB10 1SH

0345 600 9527

Recording and Monitoring

All complaints received will be recorded. We will publish statistics annually on outcomes, trends and action taken.

Complaints involving more than one Public Body or Organisation

If a complaint involves more than one agency, the agencies involved will work together and agreement will be reached regarding which agency will take the lead. Complainants will be informed of which agency will take the lead.

Legislation

This policy is informed by the following legislation:
Scottish Public Services Ombudsman Act 2002
Social Work Scotland Act 1968
NHS and Community Care Act 1990
The Human Rights Act 1998
The Data Protection Act 1998

Other people who can help you

You may feel that you want to talk to someone else to help with your complaint. There are a number of people you can approach who will advise you.

These include:

Your Local Councillor

You can find out the names of your local Councillors on the Council website
www.aberdeencity.gov.uk

Councillors hold surgeries in their ward on a regular basis so that members of the public can speak to them about any issues or problems they may have. Surgeries are advertised on the website, in local newspapers, libraries and community centres.

Surgeries are held during term time only. Not all Councillors hold surgeries, if you can't find a surgery for your local Councillor, please contact the Members Support team on 01224 523148.

Your Governmental Representatives

You can speak to your MP or MSP at their surgery. You can also write to your MP at the House of Commons, London, SW1A 0AA or your MSP at The Scottish Parliament, Edinburgh, EH99 1SP.

Local Advice Centres

Professional staff at local advice centres offer free and unbiased advice on a wide range of subjects.

Contact details for Advocacy Service Aberdeen and Citizens Advice Bureau can be found on the back page.

For your own use

Date you sent your complaint: _____

Date you received an acknowledgement: _____

Date you received an official reply: _____

Thank you for taking the time to tell us how you feel about our services in Aberdeen.

Other useful contacts:

Advocacy Service Aberdeen

Aberdeen Business Centre,
Willowbank House,
Willowbank Road,
Aberdeen AB11 6YG

Tel: 01224 332314

Email: asa@advocacy.org.uk

Citizens Advice Bureau

41 Union Street, Aberdeen
AB11 5BN

Tel: 0808 800 9060

The Care Inspectorate

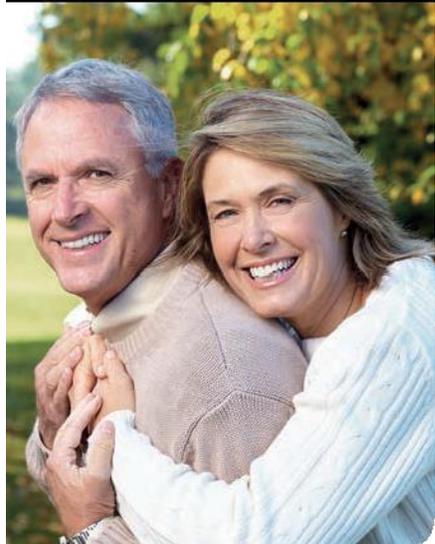
Johnstone House, Rose Street,
Aberdeen AB10 1UD

Tel: 01224 793870

Scottish Social Services Council

Compass House,
11 Riverside Drive,
Dundee, DD1 4NY

Tel: 0345 6030 891





Complaint Form

Please use this form to submit a complaint about our services.
Please write clearly and with dark ink, as the form will be photocopied.

Personal Details (We need this information so that we can reply to you)

Full Name:

Address:

Postcode:

Telephone:

If you have already spoken to someone about your complaint, please tell us who this person was and when you spoke to them.

Name of staff member:

Date when you spoke to them:

What would you like us to do?

Please tell us what reasonable steps we could take to resolve your complaint.

Please sign and date this form

Signature:

Date:

Your Complaint

In the space below, please tell us in as much detail as possible about your complaint:

- what happened and when
- who was involved
- what should have happened

Use extra sheets of paper if necessary.

What you should do now

Send the completed form and this page to:

Customer Feedback Team, Business Hub 6, 1st Floor South,
Marischal College, Broad Street, Aberdeen, AB10 1AB
or give it to a member of staff to return on your behalf.



www.aberdeencythscp.scot
www.aberdeency.gov.uk/socialworkcomplaints

If you want this document translated into another language or format (including Braille, large print, audio disk or BSL DVD) please contact us via email or telephone number listed below.

Jeżeli ten dokument jest wymagany w innej wersji językowej lub formacie (w dużym druku lub na dyskietce audio) proszę się skontaktować z

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Если Вы хотите получить этот документ, переведенным на другой язык или в другом формате (крупным шрифтом или на звуковом диске), пожалуйста, свяжитесь по

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Dacă doriți ca acest document să fie tradus într-o altă limbă sau într-un alt format (scris mare sau format audio), vă rugăm contactați

如果你需要把文件翻译成另一种语言或者把文件变成另一种格式(大号字体或声盘),请通过以下的邮件或电话方式联系我们。

Ma tha thu ag iarraidh eadar-theangachadh den sgrìobhainn seo ann an cànan neo cruth eile (clò mòr neo clàr claisinneach) feuch an cuir thu fios gu

If you are deaf or have a hearing impairment, you can still communicate with the Council via Text Relay by dialling 18001 + telephone number:

