

# Making a complaint

We are committed to providing the best possible services to everyone who uses and commissions them. However, we know that sometimes a service or practice can fall short of the quality expected. Therefore, if you have a complaint to make, we would like to hear about it.

All complaints will be thoroughly investigated. If a complaint shows The Advocacy People have fallen short of our high standards, or we need to make changes to the way we work, we will be clear about the actions we will take.

All complaints are recorded on our database so we can learn and make changes where they are needed.

Where the complaint is about a service commissioned by a Local Authority, it can be referred to the local Council at any stage. If unhappy with the Council's response, you may contact the Local Government & Social Care Ombudsman (LGO) and ask for their decision to be reviewed: [www.lgo.org.uk](http://www.lgo.org.uk)

## Key Principles

We follow these four principles during all stages of the complaints procedure:

**Independent investigation:** To maintain impartiality and transparency, investigations will be carried out by a manager or another senior staff member unconnected to the complaint.

**Support and Advocacy:** If you wish, you can be supported by an advocate, independent of the investigation, at any stage of the procedure.

**Timely response:** Our response times to complaints are set out in the 3 Stages of Resolution (right).

**Protection of confidentiality:** As far as possible, we will maintain confidentiality for the person making a complaint, and for any staff member concerned.

Complaints can be made in person, or by any of the methods shown below, to the manager of the team concerned.

If you need to find out who that is, please use the contact details given below.

The manager will respond within seven days of receiving your complaint.

## Contact Us

### The Advocacy People

P.O. Box 375, Hastings TN34 9HU

Tel: 0330 440 9000

Text: 80800 start message with PEOPLE

Email: [info@theadvocacypeople.org.uk](mailto:info@theadvocacypeople.org.uk)

Web: [www.theadvocacypeople.org.uk](http://www.theadvocacypeople.org.uk)

Opening hours Mon: 9.30am - 5pm\*  
Tue - Fri: 9am - 5pm\*

\* except bank holidays

We aim to respond to answerphone messages within 1 working day

## 3 Stages of Resolution

### Stage 1

An informal discussion will be offered between you and the line manager of the person being complained about. Details of the complaint will be sought and recorded, and potential ways of resolving the issues will be explored. Outcomes and agreed actions will be recorded and notified to you

### Stage 2

If you remain unhappy or dissatisfied with the response, please do contact us again within 20 working days, either verbally or in writing, *clearly stating what aspect of the response you are unhappy with and why* – see complaints procedure.

The formal complaint together with the Stage 1 evidence and response will be escalated to the next tier of line management for investigation by a separate independent person.

You will receive a written response within 20 working days detailing the outcomes of the complaint received and any actions identified.

### Stage 3 Review

If you remain unhappy, you can request the complaint is considered under Stage 3 Review within 20 working days of the Stage 2 response, *clearly stating what aspects of the response you are unhappy with and why*. A member of the Senior Leadership Team or a member of the Board of Trustees will conduct a review of all stages. They will respond in writing within 20 working days explaining the outcome of their investigation and any actions to be taken.

Complaints can be made at any time  
**within three (3) months of the case closure**