

A quick guide for adults

# Resolving your concerns and complaints

Quick guide to adult social care complaints procedures





This quick guide covers adult social care services and includes a duty to co-operate with any NHS body to handle complaints.

### 1. Making a complaint

Most of us don't like to complain, but sometimes things go wrong, or you may feel they could have been done better. If you tell us about it, we can try to put it right.

### 2. What is a complaint?

A complaint is any expression of dissatisfaction from a customer which needs a response and cannot be resolved by the end of the following working day. Complaints are resolved through the procedure described in this guide, which also explains the roles of advocacy, investigation and mediation in handling complaints. If a vulnerable person wants to make a complaint, staff must consider providing them with an independent advocate.

Any complaint of abuse or alleged abuse of a vulnerable person or child must be dealt with through separate safeguarding procedures as well as being recorded as a complaint.

### 3. How to complain

Our complaints officers are available to help resolve issues or provide advice and support and can be reached on:

Freephone: 0800 917 7307

Tel: 020 7974 4341

Fax: 020 7974 6089

FREEPOST RSHH-YRCE-SLTR,  
38-50 Bidborough Street.

London WC1H 9DB

Camden Council adult social care  
complaints team

Email: [adults.complaints@camden.gov.uk](mailto:adults.complaints@camden.gov.uk)

## 4. Resolving complaints

We will do our utmost to resolve any difficulty expressed by you or someone acting on your behalf, following these principles:

### Getting it right

- We will focus on getting the best result for the person making a complaint and anyone else affected.
- Staff will have flexibility to resolve complaints promptly and in the most appropriate way while still learning from complaints.
- If frontline staff cannot resolve your complaint by the end of the following working day, it should be referred to the complaints unit (see back page for contact details).
- We will acknowledge your complaint within three working days.
- We will then contact you within five working days to agree a complaints resolution plan and aim to fully respond to you within 20 working days of the complaints plan being agreed. This is a Camden standard.
- We will consider a range of ways to resolve your complaint, including a face-to-face meeting, mediation, second opinion, investigation or case review, and agree a complaints resolution plan with you. This is also the Camden standard.
- If we have to carry out a full investigation, we will aim to respond within 65 working days of agreeing a complaint resolution plan with you. Again, this is a Camden standard.
- Where your complaint is about services

provided by more than one public body, such as the NHS or an independent organisation, we will make sure we deal with it in a co-ordinated way. We will always get your consent to share information with other bodies first.

### Focusing on our customers

We will...

- provide any help or advice you need to make your complaint, including advocacy, interpretation and translation services;
- deal with your complaint promptly and avoid unnecessary delay;
- treat your complaint sensitively and take your needs into account;
- listen to and consider your views, asking you to clarify where necessary, so we understand clearly what the complaint is about and the result you want; and
- respond flexibly to each complaint and be prepared to adjust our approach to the particular circumstances.

### Being open and accountable

We will...

- ensure that information about how to complain is easily available;
- be open and honest in explaining our decisions and actions;
- give clear reasons for our decisions, backed up with evidence.
- explain why things have gone wrong and say what we will do to put them right as quickly as possible;
- handle and process information properly, according to the law and guidance; and
- take responsibility for the actions of our staff and those acting on our behalf.



## Acting fairly and proportionately

We will...

- understand and respect the diversity of our customers and ensure you have fair access to services, regardless of your background or circumstances;
- investigate your complaint thoroughly and fairly, basing our decisions on the available facts and evidence, and avoiding undue delay;
- seek to ensure, where your complaint relates to an ongoing relationship with us, that we do not treat you any differently during or after the complaint;
- ensure our response fits the circumstances; and
- apply our procedures for managing unacceptable behaviour with the minority of people who can be unreasonably persistent or aggressive in pursuing their complaints.

## Putting things right

We will...

- provide fair and proportionate remedies as part of good complaint handling. In many cases, providing a prompt explanation, an apology and appropriate response should be enough to prevent your complaint escalating.

Our responses to a complaint that has been upheld can include:

- An apology, explanation and acknowledgement of responsibility.
- Action to put things right, which may include reviewing or changing a decision on the service given to you; revising published material; revising procedures, policies or guidance to prevent the same thing happening again; training and development of staff or any combination of these.
- Financial compensation for direct or indirect financial loss and loss of opportunity, inconvenience, distress, or any combination of these, in proportion to each case.

### Seeking continuous improvement

Good complaint handling is not limited to providing an individual remedy to you, the customer. We aim to ensure that all feedback and lessons learnt from complaints contribute to service improvement.

The results of all complaints are reported to councillors and published every year.

### Contact the complaints unit

Freephone: 0800 917 7307

Tel: 0207 974 4341

Fax: 0207 974 6089

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38-50 Bidborough Street. London WC1H 9DB  
Camden Council adult social care  
complaints team

Email: [adults.complaints@camden.gov.uk](mailto:adults.complaints@camden.gov.uk)

Switchboard: 020 7974 4444 (24-hour)  
Telephone (complaints team): 020 7974 4341  
Freephone: 0800 917 7307  
Fax: 020 7974 6089  
Email: [adults.complaints@camden.gov.uk](mailto:adults.complaints@camden.gov.uk)