

18. Complaints Policy

1. Introduction.

All the Young People supported by DiD have a right to be treated with respect and dignity. Our Young People and their families/significant others have the right to express their views and to make a complaint and/or suggestions about the service we offer to enable us to make any improvements.

DiD takes a positive view of suggestions and complaints as a means of assuring the quality of service. All complaints will be taken seriously, and staff will follow the procedure and respond as quickly as possible. We will analyse all complaints to identify trends and improve the service we provide.

2. Policy objectives.

- To set out a fair, consistent and structured procedure which enables a young person to feel able to complain of any failures in the service.
- To break down any barriers so that everyone can use the complaints procedure.
- To ensure that complainants receive support through the process of making a complaint.
- To ensure that prompt action is taken on receipt of a complaint.
- To improve our quality of service.
- To improve relationships with young people.
- To encourage staff to use best practice.
- To ensure we operate within statutory frameworks.
- To ensure that the process is positive and uses the outcome of complaints and any remedial action as a positive method of monitoring performance to improve our service.

3. Process.

- A complaint can be either written or oral and be made by the complainant or an advocate.
- A complaint may be withdrawn orally or in writing at any time, whether by the complainant or an advocate.
- Young people are made aware of the complaints process on admission by way of a statement letter setting out how to do this.
- All complaints must be recorded on a discussion record and 1-2-1 session, along with the response to the outcome.
- All complaints will be dealt with promptly and efficiently.

a. Minor complaints.

- Some complaints can be rectified quickly and it will not be necessary to follow the whole process below, i.e. a young person may complain that another person is using their food, or not doing their fair share of the household chores. These can be rectified quickly by means of arranging a meeting between the young people to discuss the issues.

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b. All other complaints.

- All complaints other than minor ones, as above, will be acknowledged in writing.
- In some cases the complaint may be something that can be actioned by staff in a very short time scale/same day. Such complaints can be dealt with in a 1-2-1 session with the Young Person and recorded on a discussion record. The young person must be asked if they are satisfied with the outcome and this will also be recorded.
- All complaints, regardless of nature, must be brought to the attention of the young person's social worker.
- The complainant must be kept informed of the progress of the complaint to the conclusion.
- Complainants will receive a letter of conclusion which must include their right to appeal.
- All complaints are to be entered on the Complaints Analysis form.

c. Complainants.

- We would expect the complainant to cooperate with the investigation into a complaint and with the agreed solution .
- We would ask that complainants respond to requests of any further information and to attend meetings where possible.
- If the young person is making the complaint, staff must support the young person to ask their social worker/advocate to assist where necessary.
- Staff to treat all those involved in the complaint in a professional, courteous and respectful manner.

d. Stages of Complaints.

- Stage 1 - (local resolution) To seek the resolution of issues by the staff immediately concerned in the delivery of the support.
- Stage 2 — (Investigation) Where a complaint has not been resolved in stage 1 the complaint will be investigated by the Manager, or by the Director in the absence of the Manager.
- Stage 3 – The outcome will be delivered to the complainant and their views sought.
- Stage 4 — (Review) This stage reviews the complaint and the agreed outcome.

4. Appeals.

- If the complainant is unhappy with the outcome of their complaint they have the right to appeal. The appeal will be dealt with by the Director (or by the Manager if the Director dealt with the original complaint).
- The outcome of the appeal will be notified to the complainant in writing and they will have an opportunity to respond.

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5. Monitoring/Analysis

- Once the complaint has been dealt with and all forms have been completed we will ask the complainant and any other involved parties for comments on how we handled the complaint.
- If the complainant is appealing against a previous decision, we will seek their feedback on the process and outcome of their appeal.
- The complaint analysis log is reviewed at least every 6 months.