



Making a complaint about a Child Protection Conference



Introduction

This information sheet gives details on how to make a complaint if you are a parent or have parental responsibility for a child who has been the subject of a multi agency child protection conference you have attended. You can complain about:-

- the way the meeting was managed, or
- the decisions that were made

This information sheet also tells you how we will respond and in what timescales.

The decision of the Conference remains in place whilst your complaint is investigated.

If your complaint is about a specific agency or professional involved in the child protection process, you will need to contact that agency to find out how to make a complaint.

Stage 1 – Early Consideration by Chair

If you are unhappy, please talk to the chair of the conference during or immediately after the meeting or make contact by telephone, letter or email within 10 working days from receiving the conference notes. The chair will want to listen to your concerns and wherever possible, resolve them.

Complaints made outside the 10 working days time limit may in exceptional circumstances and at the discretion of the chair be considered.

The chair should meet with you within 10 working days of receiving your complaint. A friend or relative can go to the meeting with you for support if you want. You may qualify for advocacy, contact the Customer Relations Team for advice, our details are at the end of this leaflet. The chair will want to know from you what you think will resolve your complaint.

Within a further 10 working days, the chair will reply to your complaint in writing, but cannot change the decisions that were made at the conference. The chair will make it clear in their letter to you what you should do if you are not happy with the response and you want to take your complaint further.

Stage 2 – Formal Consideration by a Panel

If you are not satisfied with the response and would like to take your complaint to the next stage, you should contact the Customer Relations Manager within 20 working days of receiving the chair's letter. You should say why you are not happy with the response and what you want to achieve by taking your complaint further.

A Panel meeting will be arranged by the Customer Relations Manager in liaison with the Safeguarding Manager within 20 working days to consider your complaint. The Panel will be made up of at least three senior representatives from at least two different agencies such as health,

education, police, or children's social care. They will not have had any direct involvement with you and your family, so will bring independence to the process. You can be at this meeting if you want to and you can bring a friend or an advocate to support you.

The Customer Relations Manager will advise you about the process and will arrange for the Panel to have copies of all relevant records, reports, correspondence and details of all the people involved in the conference.

The Customer Relations Manager will be present on the day to oversee the Panel meeting.

The Panel cannot change the initial decision that was made at the conference.

The Panel can decide:-

- that the conference did not follow the correct procedures or that the decisions made were unreasonable and so direct that the conference is held again with a different chair
- that the review conference is brought forward
- that correct procedures were followed, the recommendations made were reasonable and therefore the original conference decisions stand. Any new information will be considered in the usual way at the next review conference.

The Panel Chair will write to you within 10 working days of the Panel Meeting to inform you of their decision.

Next Steps

If you are unhappy with the outcome of your complaint:

- you can seek legal advice from a solicitor about taking your complaint to judicial review. Your local Citizen's Advice Bureau can help you find a suitable solicitor.

or

- you can refer your complaint to the Local Government & Social Care Ombudsman. The Local Government Ombudsman's address is at the end of this leaflet.



Useful Contact Details

Safeguarding Manager

Safeguarding & Quality Assurance
St Mark's House
14 Upperton Road
Eastbourne
East Sussex, BN21 1EP
Phone: 01323 466606
Email: cp.conferencingservice@eastsussex.gov.uk

Customer Relations Manager

Children's Services Customer
Relations Team
East Sussex County Council
County Hall
PO Box 4
St Anne's Crescent
Lewes
East Sussex, BN7 1SG
Phone: 0345 60 80 192
Text: 07797 878888
Website: www.eastsussex.gov.uk/CSFeedback

Local Government & Social Care Ombudsman

PO Box 4771
Coventry
CV4 0EH
Phone: 0300 061 0614
Email: advice@lgo.org.uk
Website: www.lgo.org.uk

Other Useful Information

For more information about the
Local Safeguarding Procedures
[www.eastsussexlscb.org.uk/
our-procedures](http://www.eastsussexlscb.org.uk/our-procedures)

For more information on how we
manage your personal information
www.eastsussex.gov.uk/privacy

**If you would like this information in
large print, in Braille, on audio tape
or in another language please phone
0345 60 80 192.**

East Sussex County Council

County Hall
St Anne's Crescent
Lewes BN7 1UE
Phone: 0345 60 80 190
Website: eastsussex.gov.uk/contactus
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