

Representations and Complaints Guide for Young People

Got a complaint?

- We want to know
- We will listen to you
- We will do our best to make things better

Applies to England, Scotland and Wales

Fostering, Adoption, Children's Services, Supported Accommodation
and Residential

 **Call** 01527 556480 **email** contactus@polariscommunity.co.uk

If you are unhappy about the way you are being supported, then you must let staff know so that things can be sorted out quickly.

You might feel that:

- You are not getting the service you expected to get
- The service is not being given in the way you thought it would
- You are not being treated properly by people from the Polaris Community.

What should you do?

The most important thing is that you tell somebody, or write it down, so that the problem does not get any bigger or become more serious. You must not feel worried about making a complaint to us. It is your right to make a complaint, and we know that we don't always get things right. By making a complaint you are giving us the chance to make our service better.

What happens when I make a complaint?

When we are looking into your complaint, we will keep you informed of what we are doing to sort it out. If it seems that you or another young person have been or are being hurt or that there is some danger, then we will have to take action to make sure this stops, and will need to work with Social Services to do that. The complaint will be investigated by a manager that has not been involved or mentioned in a complaint.

I have problems speaking so how can I make a complaint?

If you have any problems in speaking or making yourself understood, we will make sure that you have the help of someone who understands the way in which you speak, and can get your complaint heard or you can request an Advocate.



How do I find an Advocate?

You can also talk to an Advocate: this is someone who will speak up for you if you need help. They will make sure your views and wishes are heard and acted upon.

You can make contact with an Advocacy Service yourself through:

National Youth Advocacy Service
0808 8081001
www.nyas.net

Children's Legal Centre
01206 714650
www.childrenslegal.com

The first thing we will do...

We will try to resolve any concerns or issues raised without the need for it to be considered as a complaint and investigated via the complaints process. This is known as the Representations and Pre-Complaint Process. We will work closely with you to determine what your concerns are to see if we can sort out any challenges, so that you are happy with the situation. However, if we are unable to resolve your concerns, then we will let you know what we have done or plan to do to sort out the problem within 4 weeks. We will write to you to tell you this, but will also speak with you to make sure you understand and are happy with any actions. This is known as Stage 1.

What if I am not happy with what they say?

If you are still unhappy, tell the person who has written and spoken to you at Stage 1, or contact Polaris on 01527 556480 or contactus@polariscommunity.co.uk, where you will be directed to the appropriate person.

You must not feel worried about making a complaint to us – we want to know how we can get things right. Making a complaint won't make things worse for you.

The second thing we will do...

We will do our best to try and resolve the issue at Stage 1, however if you are not happy with the outcome after the first stage, it will be important to have someone new to look at things for you and to have further discussions with relevant people about whether the complaint should go to Stage 2.

We will ask someone independent from the service, called an Independent Investigator, to talk to you about your complaint, and to talk to other people about what is going wrong.

They will try to finish this within 4 weeks of you letting us know that you are still not happy, but if they need longer they will let you know why. The Independent Investigator will write a report on what they have found out, and say what they think should be done to put it right. The person dealing with your complaint will then write to you to let you know what has been decided, and what will happen to sort it out. Someone will also talk to you about this.

What if the problem has not really been sorted out, or I am unhappy about the Independent Investigation?

You should tell the person dealing with your complaint and they will consider next course of action but in the first instance they will try to resolve it at Stage 2.

The third thing we will do...

If we cannot resolve the complaint at Stage 2, you can request it be progressed to Stage 3. At Stage 3, a Senior Leader will review the complaint within 4 weeks. You will be kept informed of any delays in responding to the complaint should more time be required by the Senior Leader to consider the information provided.

The Senior Leader dealing with the complaint within Polaris will be independent of the service and will have had no prior involvement in the complaint.



What if I am still not happy?

There may be other people you can complain to if you are still not happy, and we will make sure that you know who they are and how to get in touch with them. Some useful contact details are listed in this guide.

Useful Contacts

Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman,

PO Box 4771

Coventry

CV4 0EH

Tel: 0300 061 0614

Website: www.lgo.org.uk

Children's Commissioner for England

Dame Rachel de Souza

Tel: 0800 528 0731

Sanctuary Buildings

20 Great Smith Street

London

SW1P 3BT

Tel: 020 7783 8330

Email: help.team@childrenscommissioner.gov.uk

Website: www.childrenscommissioner.gov.uk/help-at-hand

Young Person's Complaint Form

Your Name	
Your Address	
Your Telephone Number	
Your Outreach Worker	
Date of Complaint	

What is your complaint?

Have you spoken to anyone about this complaint? **YES NO**

If **YES**, who have you spoken to?

Have you spoken to the complaints advocate? **YES NO**

Once we receive your complaint we will respond to you as soon as we can, we will aim to respond within 4 weeks. You can take a picture and e-mail it to contactus@polariscommunity.co.uk, call us on **01527 556480** to talk through it, or post your complaint to the address below:

**Malvern View, Saxon Business Park, Hanbury Road, Stoke Prior
Bromsgrove B60 4AD**



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