

## Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman Customer service complaints procedure

We are committed to offering a high standard of service. We take any complaints about our service seriously and aim to address any areas where we have not delivered to the standards we expect of **ourselves. We value complaints and use information from them to help us improve our services.**

If something goes wrong or you are not satisfied with our service, please tell us. You have the right to complain if you feel we have failed in the service we have provided to you. This information is available on our website.

### What is a service complaint?

A service complaint is an expression of dissatisfaction from one or more customers or members of the public about the standard of service we have provided.

You can complain about things like:

- > failure to provide a service, or inadequate standard of service
- > how we met your needs
- > how we communicated with you
- > how long we took to deal with your case
- > treatment by or attitude of a member of staff
- > failure to follow the appropriate administrative process.

This list does not cover everything.

### What isn't covered by the service complaints process?

There are also some things we can't deal with through our service complaints handling process. This would include where you are unhappy about our **decision** on your complaint. These issues are dealt with through our decision review process, see our website for more details.

The following are not covered by our service complaints process:

- > an expression of disagreement about our decision on a complaint or the evidence taken into account in reaching that decision
- > an attempt to reopen a previously concluded service complaint or to have a service complaint reconsidered
- > a request for information
- > issues that are in court or have already been heard by a court or a tribunal

## Who can complain?

Anyone can make a complaint to us, including the representative of someone who is unhappy with our service.

## How do I complain?

You can complain by phone, in writing or by email.

We are committed to making our service easy to use for all members of the community.

We will always ensure that reasonable adjustments are made to help customers access and use our services. If you have trouble making a complaint or want this information in another language or format (such as large font or Braille) please contact us.

## How long do I have to make a service complaint?

Normally, you must make your complaint within one month of the event you want to complain about, or finding out that you have a reason to complain.

In exceptional circumstances, we may be able to accept a complaint after the time limit. If you feel that the time limit should not apply to your complaint, please tell us why.

## What happens when I have complained?

We aim to resolve complaints quickly and close to where we provided the service. This could mean an on-the-spot apology and explanation if something has clearly gone wrong. We will try to take immediate action to resolve the problem whenever this is possible.

It is easier for us to resolve complaints if you make them quickly and directly to the person or section of our service concerned. So please talk to a member of our staff who will try to resolve any problems on-the-spot.

If your complaint is not resolved then it will be considered by a senior manager. They will respond to your complaint within twenty working days or less, unless there are exceptional circumstances. Occasionally, we may have to extend this timeline. We will only do so when this will make it more likely that we can resolve your complaint.

## **What if I'm still dissatisfied?**

We must ask you to accept the manager's decision on your service complaint will be final. There are no appeal rights or further stages.

## **Our contact details**

Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman  
PO Box 4771  
Coventry  
CV4 0EH