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About this document

The Council has a duty to consider complaints about Adult Services, which is set out in the [Local Authority Social Services and National Health Service Complaints \(England\) Regulations 2009](#). This document explains the Council's interpretation of the Regulations; it sets out the process for handling complaints about West Sussex Adult Services, and provides summary information on what you can expect at each stage of the complaints process.

The Council works to the timescales set out in this document and will always seek to deal with complaints as swiftly as possible.

All decisions are made on a case-by-case basis.

The Council's process for managing complaints about Adult Services has two stages:

Stage 1: Local Resolution

The majority of complaints are considered and resolved at stage one. On receipt of a stage one complaint the Council will liaise with you to clarify and set out the key points of the complaint to be answered, and will check what you would like done to put things right. This step helps ensure that the Council's response is comprehensive and covers each of the points raised in the complaint.

At this stage, you can let the Council know if you require additional support to follow the complaints procedure (e.g. if you have a disability), and we will make reasonable adjustments where possible.

The appropriate manager within Adult Services, will send a full response to you within 20 working days of receiving the complaint.

If you are not satisfied that your complaint has been adequately dealt with at stage one, you can request that it be escalated to stage two. Details of how to do this will be included on your stage one complaint response letter.

Stage 2: Final Response

If you want your complaint to be escalated to stage two, you should let the Council know and where possible, set out your reasons for requesting escalation.

Stage two is the Council's final response and involves a senior manager reviewing the complaint and the stage one response. To ensure the review is independent, this will be undertaken by a different the senior manager to the manager who responded to the stage one complaint.

During the stage two review, the senior manager will:

- Read the original complaint, the stage one response and any relevant correspondence;
- Cross-reference the complaint against the stage one response checking if each point in the complaint has been satisfactorily covered in the response;
- Review and consider any evidence informing decisions at stage one;
- Review and consider any new evidence;
- Review the decisions stated in the stage one response.

The senior manager will complete the investigation and send the response within 10 working days. In cases where 10 working days is not feasible, the Council will maintain communication with you, giving you the reason for the delay, and where possible reach a mutual agreement as to what is a reasonable timescale.

For further information please contact the West Sussex County Council Complaints Team by emailing ccdfeedback@westsussex.gov.uk or by telephoning 0330 2228222.

Local Government & Social Care Ombudsman

If having completed all of the stages of this complaints procedure you still remain dissatisfied, you can ask to have your complaint reviewed by the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman ('he Ombudsman').

The Ombudsman can investigate individual complaints about councils, all adult social care providers (including care homes and home care agencies) and some other public service organisations. If they decide to investigate, the Ombudsman's investigators look at whether organisations have made decisions the right way.

You can find out more information about what complaints the Ombudsman may consider on its [website](#).

If you wish to raise your complaint with the Ombudsman, you can find out more information about how to do so below:

Website: <https://www.lgo.org.uk/how-to-complain>

Telephone: 0300 061 0614