

**SOCIAL CARE COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE**

**SELF-HELP PACK**

**BRISTOL ADULT SERVICES**

**To make a referral please contact The Advocacy People on 0330 4409000 or info@theadvocacypeople.org.uk**

**INTRODUCTION**

This self-help guide aims to help you to understand the process involved in making a complaint about Social Services.

Complaints Procedure Advocacy may be able to offer you advocacy to support you through the process.

If, after reading this pack, you need any further help or information, please feel free to contact us.

**HOW CAN CPA HELP?**

This service is a free and independent service to support people making a complaint about adult social care services within Bristol.

We will be able to:

* Explain how the complaints procedure works
* Assist with letter writing
* Advise and assist in deciding what information you need to gather to support your complaint
* Support you by attending meetings with you
* Visit you at home, if you are unable to meet us at our office

Complaints Procedure Advocacy is part of Advocacy Services at The Care Forum in partnership with The Advocacy People

We are based at The Vassall Centre, Gill Avenue, Fishponds, Bristol BS16 2QQ.

We can be contacted by telephone. Please call the advocate’s contact details on the introductory letter or by e-mail at cpa@thecareforum.org.uk

**Referrals** to The Advocacy People on 0330 4409000 or info@theadvocacypeople.org.uk

**WHY MAKE A COMPLAINT?**

People make complaints to achieve a variety of things, such as

* To get an explanation as to what exactly happened and why
* To get an apology
* To receive a different or an improved service
* To receive financial compensation to make up for things that could have been done better

**WHAT SORT OF THINGS CAN I COMPLAIN ABOUT?**

You can use the procedure to complain about anything that is the responsibility of Social Services, such as

* Staff being rude or unhelpful
* Poor service or the lack of a service
* Failures to follow policies or procedures
* Delays in things happening
* Discrimination or harassment
* Inaccurate or misleading information

**WHO CAN COMPLAIN?**

Adults using Social Services or wanting to use Social Services can make a complaint. You can also complain on behalf of a person using a service, with their consent. People such as carers, parents, and staff would usually be considered as appropriate people to make a complaint on behalf of a service user.

Local Authorities will not usually allow complaints about events which happened more than 12 months ago, unless you can provide very good reasons for a delay in making a complaint.

There are also some matters, such as things which are going to Court, which cannot be complained about. The Complaints Manager is responsible for telling you about this.

**HOW DO I MAKE A COMPLAINT?**

You can contact the person who usually provides you with a service or ask to speak to their manager. They can give you a complaints leaflet or you may choose to submit a complaint on-line on the Council website. You may prefer to write a letter outlining your complaint.

**CONTACT DETAILS FOR BRISTOL CITY COUNCIL COMPLAINTS TEAM**

 The Complaints Team

Freepost RTKJ-SGBZ-ULSH

Customer Relations Team (100TS)

PO Box 3176

Bristol City Council

BS3 9FS

complaints.feedback@bristol.gov.uk

0117 922 2723

**COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE**

There is a flexible process which involves an individually-tailored response to your particular complaint.

* In the first instance, you can talk to your key worker, social worker or their manager about your problem to see if they can resolve the issue. If things cannot be resolved informally, you can refer the matter to the Complaints Manager. Alternatively, you can contact the Complaints Manager immediately with a brief outline of your concerns.
* Your complaint will usually be acknowledged within 3 working days. A manager will be assigned to contact you, either by telephone or in writing, to talk about your complaint and in some cases to arrange a meeting to discuss your complaint further.
* During the initial telephone call or at that meeting, you will be able to discuss your concerns in some detail and a plan will be agreed with you as to how your complaint will be handled. You may wish to have a meeting with the social worker or carer as well as the person looking into your complaint or you may wish to ask for an independent investigator to become involved. You will know who is going to deal with your complaint and when and how often you can expect to hear from them. You will know who they are going to speak to. A time frame will be agreed for the person dealing with your complaint to get back to you and their response will be in writing.

If you are not happy with the outcome of your complaint, you are entitled to refer the matter to the **Local Authority Ombudsman**. You can do this by telephoning **0300 061 0614** or via the website- <https://www.lgo.org.uk/make-a-complaint>.

**FURTHER ADVICE**

If you would like further advice or if you would like to have the support of an advocate from The Care Forum to help you through the complaints process, please contact:

Telephone: Please call the advocate shown on the introductory letter

e-mail: cpa@thecareforum.org.uk

**COMPLAINTS AND FEEDBACK**

We hope you will benefit from our service, however if you want to make a complaint about our service, please contact the Director of Operations via [0117 965 4444](https://www.google.com/search?q=the+care+forum&oq=the+care&aqs=chrome.1.69i57j69i59j69i65l2.4543j0j15&sourceid=chrome&ie=UTF-8) or admin@thecareforum.org.uk

**Example letter template**

Your Address here

Complaints Team address

Date

Dear Complaints Team,

I am writing to complain about.....

**Background**

Details about personal circumstances which are relevant to the complaint...

**Complaint Issues**

1.........

2.........

Include examples with dates and names wherever possible

**Outcomes**

I am seeking the following outcomes:

1........

2........

Yours sincerely

Name and signature