

Complaints Policy and Procedure

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Linked Policies	Employee Handbook, Organisation Chart, Whistle blowing Policy, Grievance Policy and Procedure, Equality, Diversity and Human Rights Policy

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Scope of the Policy

This policy covers how we deal with complaints that we receive regarding any of the services that we provide, or an external complaint made regarding the conduct of an individual representing Age Concern Hampshire, including employees, volunteers and members of the trustee board.

Employees who feel that they are being bullied or harassed in the workplace or that such behaviour is taking place, should raise their concerns with their line manager or, if that is not appropriate, with an appropriate person in HR. Please refer to our Employee Handbook and our Grievance Policy and procedure.

Any concern about malpractice or wrongdoing within the organisation should be dealt with in accordance with our Whistle Blowing Policy.

Policy Statement

Age Concern Hampshire is committed to providing the best possible services for older people living in Hampshire. We will seek and listen to feedback as part of an open and transparent culture, seeking to improve and strengthen our services in response.

- All comments, suggestions and complaints are dealt with professionally and promptly and, where appropriate, are treated in confidence. However, in order to investigate complaints thoroughly, it may be necessary to share details of the complaint.
- ACH takes all complaints seriously and there is a formal process in place to ensure that all complaints are given due consideration, investigated and resolved.
- All complaints are logged, together with any action that is taken to resolve the complaint. This ensures that we have visibility of the complaint and that it has been dealt with appropriately.
- Complainants will be kept informed of progress during the complaint process and of the outcome.
- There is also a process in place to escalate a complaint if the complainant is not satisfied with the outcome of their complaint.
- We will review complaints that have been received on a regular basis, to identify where changes can be made to improve our services or procedures.
- Improvements made in response to a complaint will be prioritised, resourced and monitored and we will ensure staff know about these improvements and what prompted them to be introduced.
- We ask that where possible a complaint is raised as soon as it arises so it can be dealt with promptly. If there is a long delay before a complaint is made, we may not be able to deal with it effectively
- We aim to rectify any errors on our part as quickly as possible, e.g. an error in billing a client.

- Clients and family members, where appropriate, will be given information on what they can expect from us and what to do if something is not right. This will include a description of what a good standard of care is like. This information will be provided in an accessible format, taking into account individual needs, e.g. visual impairment or learning difficulties.
- Multiple methods of raising concerns and providing feedback will be made available to clients and their family members. These methods will be adapted for individual needs and will include opportunities to raise any concerns with staff members other than those who directly deliver the service that the client receives.
- Additional support or advocacy will can be made available to help with a complaint if required.
- Anyone who makes a complaint will not be treated differently from others and will have access to the same high standards of care as before, as will their family/carers
- Employees and volunteers will be encouraged to share views and be part of a culture of improvement and strengthening of the service.

Procedure

How to make a complaint

Stage One

Where possible talking with staff will usually resolve any problems you may have, so if you feel confident to do so, we would ask that you discuss the matter with your local service manager. You can telephone or write a letter to them if you feel more comfortable, or you can email complaints@ageconcernhampshire.org.uk. We hope that they will be able to resolve things for you straight away or explain the reason if they are unable to do so.

The member of staff receiving the complaint (or their supervisor if appropriate), will log details of the complaint on our in-house secure database.

Stage Two

If you do not want to discuss the matter with a member of staff, or they have been unable to resolve things for you then you should contact the Service Delivery Manager for the service either by telephone, email or post.

Please refer to our Organisation Chart, for the appropriate person to contact. Details are also on our website.

The Service Delivery Manager will acknowledge your complaint within **5 working days** from the date of receipt and will aim to resolve your complaint within **20 working days**.

Sometimes, due to the complexity of your complaint they will not be able to meet this timescale. If this happens we will write to you, and keep you fully informed of the progress being made.

Stage Three

If you are unhappy with the response you have received at Stage Two then you should contact Age Concern Hampshire's Chief Executive Officer (CEO).

The CEO will investigate your complaint and respond to you in writing within **20 working days**.

What if you are still not happy?

If you are still not satisfied with the outcome of your complaint, you can escalate to the Age Concern Hampshire board of Trustee Directors, by writing to them c/o ACH Head Office, Lockwood Day Centre, Locks Heath, SO31 6DX.

If your complaint relates to the quality of care provision, you can escalate to make a complaint to the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman <https://www.lgo.org.uk/make-a-complaint>

In addition further information on possible independent escalation points can be found here <https://www.gov.uk/complain-about-charity>

Communication & Training

All staff will be made aware of this policy.

This policy will be available to members of the public on our website www.ageconcernhampshire.org.uk

Audit & Review

This policy will be audited against on an annual basis and reviewed in 3 years time or sooner should legislation or audit dictate such a review.