

How to make a
complaint/appeal
about a Child Protection
Conference or Review

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Illustrations by Kellie Craig



How to make a complaint/appeal about a Child Protection Conference or Review

A guide for adults, young people and children

Who can make a complaint/appeal?

Parents, carers and children who are involved in Child Protection Conferences and Review Conferences who have concerns about their Conference or Review can make a complaint/appeal.

When can I make a complaint/appeal?

You can make a complaint/appeal if you think the conference did not follow the correct process, used wrong information, decided on the wrong category of primary concern, or made the wrong decision about making or stopping a child protection plan.

Note: During the course of a complaint/appeal's consideration, the decision made by the Conference will stand.

Can I complain about individual people or agencies?

Complaints about individual people and agencies, their performance and provision of services, are not dealt with under this process. You should deal with this by using the relevant agency's complaints process.

How do I start my complaint/appeal?

You should tell the Chair of the conference immediately if you have any concerns about how the conference is proceeding. If the Chair cannot sort out the problem there and then he/she will ask you to send your complaint/appeal in writing within **3 working days** of the conference.

Tell the Chair straight away if you need help to put your complaint/appeal into writing. The Chair will arrange for a professional worker to help you.

Complaints/appeals should be addressed to:
Calderdale Safeguarding Board Manager
Northgate House
Halifax HX1 1UN

The Stage One meeting

The Conference Chair will arrange to meet you to discuss your complaint/appeal within **5 working days** of receiving your written complaint/appeal. This is called a Stage One meeting.

Notes will be made of the Stage One meeting, including reasons for the Conference Chair's decision-making. The Conference Chair will send a copy of these notes to you. A copy of the notes will also be sent to the Safeguarding Children Board Manager.

If the problem is not resolved at the Stage One meeting, then you will be advised by the Chair to write to the Safeguarding Children Board Manager within **3 working days** of the Stage One meeting. Again, help to do this can be provided by a professional worker, if you need this.

Note the 3 working days time limit:

Complaints/appeals made after the 3 working day time limit are only allowed in exceptional circumstances and at the discretion of the Safeguarding Children Board Manager.

You can bring an advocate or friend to support you at all stages of the complaint/appeal process.

What will happen next?

Within **10 working days** of receiving your written complaint/appeal the Safeguarding Children Board Manager will arrange a Complaints and Appeals Panel (the Panel) to hear your complaint/appeal. The Safeguarding Children Board Manager will write to you to tell you when and where the Panel will meet.

The Complaints and Appeals Panel

The Panel will have at least three members:

It will be chaired by the Chair of Calderdale Safeguarding Children Board or his/her nominee (the Panel Chair) and include at least two other members of Calderdale Safeguarding Children Board, from different agencies, who have had no direct line management responsibility for your case.

The Panel Chair will decide who else will be on the Panel based on the expertise and specialist advice needed to resolve the issues presented by your case.

Who will be at the Complaints and Appeals Panel meeting?

- You will be invited to attend the Panel so that you can explain your complaint/appeal, and to make further representations if you wish
- The Conference Chair will be invited to attend the Panel to clarify points with regard to his or her decision-making and other comments that may be useful

Note:

The Panel meeting will include both you and the Conference Chair unless there are exceptional reasons for your being seen separately.

- A person will be there to take notes (the minutes).

What will the Complaints and Appeals Panel do?

The Panel will begin by:

- looking at all the information available
- deciding what further evidence or information is needed
- deciding the process to be followed in considering your complaint.

What decisions can the Complaints and Appeals Panel make?

The Panel may make one or more of the following decisions based on a majority:

- To state that the Child Protection Conference procedures were followed correctly
- To state that the Child Protection Conference procedures were not followed correctly, in what respects, and make a recommendation as to how this should be remedied
- To support the original Child Protection Conference decision
- To recommend that the Child Protection Conference be reconvened with the same or a different Conference Chair to reconsider any recommendation regarding the decision that the child should have or continue to have a Child Protection Plan and the Category of Significant Harm on which any such decision is based
- To decide that they have insufficient information to make a decision and set out a timescale for completing the task and set a date for a further hearing
- To decide whether there are any learning points for a specific agency

Note:

The Panel does not have the authority to reverse a Conference decision.

What will the Panel base its decisions on?

The Panel will base its decisions on your written complaint/appeal, the Conference minutes, the notes of the Stage One meeting, and the procedures for the conference.

Who will know about the Panel's decisions?

The Panel Chair will make sure that you are sent the minutes of the Panel meeting. Everyone who was at the Child Protection Conference will also be sent minutes of the Panel meeting.

The Panel will tell the relevant Board member about any specific concerns and recommendations it has relating to practice or procedure on the part of any Calderdale Safeguarding Children Board agency.

What happens if the conference is reconvened?

The Chair of a reconvened Child Protection Conference will make sure that all those present have seen, or are briefed at the start of the Conference about, the decisions and any recommendations made by the Panel.

The Conference will again consider, taking fully into account any recommendation made, whether the risk of continuing significant harm criteria for a Child Protection Plan are met, and if so, the relevant Category of Significant Harm.

What if, after all this, I am still not satisfied?

If you are still dissatisfied with the outcome of the process you may wish to take your grievance further with the Local Government Ombudsman or seek legal advice about other remedies such as Judicial Review.

**The complaint/appeal process is explained in more detail on the Calderdale Safeguarding Children Board website at:
[www. calderdale-scb.org.uk](http://www.calderdale-scb.org.uk)**

Help and advice

The following is a list of advice and advocacy services you might find helpful:

Solicitors

a list of solicitors who specialise in family law can be found in the Solicitors and Barristers Directory, available in Central Library, Northgate, Halifax

Tel: 01422 392630

www.lawsociety.org.uk/choosingandusing/findasolicitor.law

Citizens' Advice Bureau

have offices in Halifax, Brighouse, Elland, Hebden Bridge, Todmorden

Advice line: Tel:01422 842848

www.calderdalecab.org.uk

Other local advice centres include:

Queens Road Advice Centre

194 Queens Road Halifax HX1 4NE

Tel: 01422 322778

www.queensroadadvice.com

Rhodes Street Advice Centre

Tel: 01422 341908

Parentline

a free, confidential help-line for anyone in a parenting role is provided by Parentline

Tel: 0808 800 2222

www.parentlineplus.org.uk

Family Rights Group Advice Line

Tel: freephone 0800 731 1696

from 10.00 am to 12.00 pm and

1.30 pm to 3.30 pm on weekdays

(advice can be offered in languages other than English)

www.frg.org.uk

Calderdale Safeguarding Children Board wants to provide helpful, accurate and understandable information. If you find any of this information unclear, wrong or out-of-date, or if you think additional information would help other readers, please let us know so that amendments can be made.
Contact: 01422 393337

If you would like this information
in another format or language,
please contact: 01422 393337

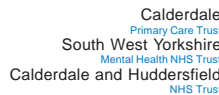
আপনি যদি এই তথ্য অন্য কোন মাধ্যম অথবা ভাষায় চান
তাহলে দয়া করে যোগাযোগ করুন :
01422 393337

اگر آپ کو یہ معلومات کسی دوسری زبان
یا شکل میں چاہیے تو رابطہ کریں:
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Calderdale
Safeguarding
Children
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www.calderdale-scb.org.uk



Call 01422 393337

Safeguarding children - everyone's responsibility