



# The Advocacy Project

## Feedback and complaints policy

How to complain or comment about The Advocacy Project



<b>Policy Name</b>	Feedback and complaints policy			
<b>History</b>	Date adopted Jan 2017	Date of last review Jan 2019	Date of last updates Jan 2019	Unitary board approval 5 Feb 2019
<b>Approval Authority</b>	Judith Davey			
<b>Responsible Office</b>	Deputy CEO			

**Scope: All feedback about** The Advocacy Project (whether comments, compliments or complaints)

**Reason for Policy:** We need to know what we are doing well, what we could do better and what we are not doing well as this helps us learn and improve. This is why we welcome all feedback, whether positive or negative.

**Who Should Read this Policy:** All staff and anyone wishing to provide feedback

**Definitions: None**

**References and Resources:** An easy read version of this policy is available. Ask any member of staff or find it on the website <http://www.advocacyproject.org.uk/contact/>

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# The Advocacy Project Feedback Policy

Your advocate will give you this document, 'Feedback and complaints policy' when they first meet with you.

## Why is your feedback important?

We want to make sure that you are satisfied with anything that we do and the services that we provide. We need to know what we are doing well, what we could do better and what we are not doing well. This is why we welcome all feedback, whether positive or negative.

We take all comments and complaints seriously and aim to resolve your concerns in a timely manner and learn from our mistakes to improve.

We are committed to accessible and alternative communication to facilitate people to provide feedback.

We are happy to accept your complaint or comments in the best way for you to communicate. This could be through speech or written or by using a communication tool such as talking mats. Please let us know and we will support you with this.

## Telling us that we've done something well

We value our staff and it is important that they know when they are doing a good job or have exceeded expectations. We use compliments to build on success and continue to provide excellent levels of service.

We will acknowledge your compliment within 3 working days of receipt. Details will be passed to the relevant manager who will ensure that the team or staff member receives your thanks.

## Telling us if you are unhappy about something that we've done

Please let us know if you are unhappy with something that we have done or the service you have received. Making a complaint or raising your concerns will not affect your current or future service, you will continue to be treated fairly and sensitively.

You will receive a response from us about your complaint in a 3 working days.

We welcome your feedback because it is used to help us improve.

We understand and respect that some people may need advice and support from an independent advocate or interpreter to make their complaint, to pursue it, to understand the process and the outcome.

Complaints should be made within 12 months of the eventualities that caused the problem, or the complainant realising there is a problem.

## How you can make a complaint

### Stage 1

We hope that most concerns can be settled easily and quickly by discussing the problem with the member of staff involved. If you tell them what is worrying you, they will try to find a solution or advise you who the best person is to speak to.

You can make a complaint:

- Verbally
- In writing
- Through assisted communication.

We will:

- Listen to you
- Think about what you've said
- Find out what happened
- Take action (as appropriate)

If you make your complaint verbally or by telephone, we will give you an accessible written record of your complaint and give you the opportunity to change it if required, this can be written text or in easy read.

## Stage 2

If your concerns cannot be immediately resolved or you are unhappy with the outcome, you can raise the issue with a manager. The manager will acknowledge receipt of your complaint within 1 working day and will contact you within 3 working days.

If you make your complaint verbally or by telephone, we will give you an accessible written record of your complaint and give you the opportunity to change it if required.

The manager will:

- Listen to you
- Think about what you've said
- Find out what happened
- Take action (as appropriate)

They will contact you within 14 working days to tell you what the outcome is and what action will be taken.

If we make a mistake, we will apologise and try to take some practical action to put things right.

We will ask you to suggest what you would like us to do.

## Stage 3

If you remain unhappy with our response to your complaint, you can request that the complaint is escalated to stage 3.

This is where a senior manager who is independent from the service that you're complaining about looks at your complaint and reviews how the complaint was investigated to check that all relevant information has been considered.

We ask that you let us know that you want to move to stage 3 within 20 working days from the date you received the communication from the manager in stage 2.

In order for us to consider your request you will need to explain why you are still unhappy and what you would like to happen to put things right.

The senior manager will:

- Listen to you
- Think about what you've said
- Find out what happened
- Take action (as appropriate)

We will aim to do this within 14 working days. A complex case may take longer but we will keep you informed of progress and likely timescales.

## Stage 4 Appeal

If you are still unhappy with the outcome of your complaint after stage 3, you have the right to appeal to the Advocacy Project's Chief Executive Officer or Chair of the Board if the complaint is about the Chief Executive.

A panel will be convened to hear your appeal. The outcome of the appeal panel is final.

We will let you know the outcome of the appeal panel in a timely manner and in a way that best suits you.

## Ways to give feedback to The Advocacy Project

You can contact us on:

Email                      [HR@advocacyproject.org.uk](mailto:HR@advocacyproject.org.uk)

Telephone                020 8969 3000

We want to make it as easy as possible for you to speak to us.

You can make a complaint using these forms:

- Easy Read form
- Feedback form

You can make a complaint in these alternative formats:

- By telephone
- Letter
- Email
- Audio tape or CD
- Braille

If you need help to complain we can make sure you have support from

- a British sign language interpreter
- a Makaton communicator
- an independent advocate

If you need another form of communication please let us know.

All information we gather as part of the complaints process is covered under the data protection act and we will keep your information safe.

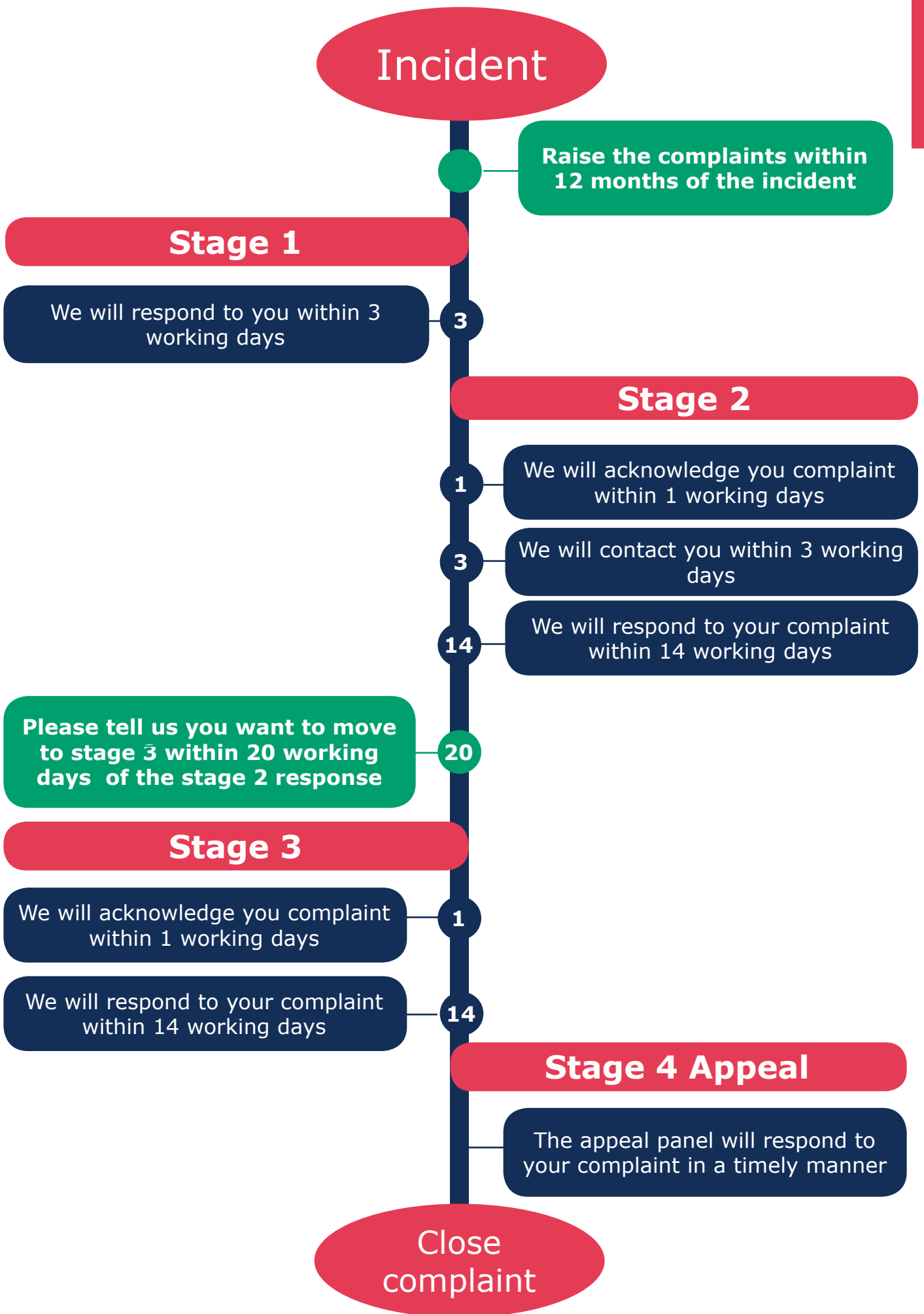
## Making a formal complaint about The Advocacy Project to a Government department.

In certain circumstances, you may be able to complain about us to the Charity Commission. More information about the sorts of issues that the Charity Commission would consider is provided on their website

[www.charitycommission.gov.uk](http://www.charitycommission.gov.uk)

If you are not satisfied with the outcome and are complaining about a service that is funded by a Local Authority or the NHS, you can complain to the Commissioner of that service. We will explain to you in the response to your appeal.







The Advocacy Project,  
c/o SEIDs Hub, Empire Way  
Wembley HA9 0RJ  
Tel: 020 8969 3000.  
[www.advocacyproject.org.uk](http://www.advocacyproject.org.uk).

