



Lambeth EDT Protocol 2024

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About this document

Title	Lambeth Children's Social Care EDT Protocol 2024
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Intended Audience

This document has been issued to the following people for Review (R) Information (I) and Review and Sign off (S). The EDT Protocol is mandatory and must be shared with all managers, and social work staff and with those holding cases in Early Help to ensure understanding of the out of hours protocol.

Name	Position	S/R/I
	Director of Children's Social Care	S
	All ADs	R
	All SMs / TMs	R
	All Children's Social Care Practitioners	I

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The Role of the Emergency Duty Team

The Emergency Duty Team (EDT) provides a service at all times outside office hours. The service runs from 17:00 on weekdays (17:00 on a Friday) until 09:00 the following working day. At weekends and Bank Holidays cover is for 24 hours a day.

EDT is not intended to provide the same level of service that is available during normal office hours. The service does not have the resources to do so, either in terms of staff or access to information and support from partner agencies.

EDT will be responsible for all referrals made to Children and Adults Services outside of office hours. EDT staff will follow standard departmental procedures and guidance in determining their response to those referrals

Emergency Duty Team Rota

All the EDT permanently employed staff are Advanced Practitioners and they will undertake the initial case decision making, risk assessment and care planning.

EDT has a rolling 6-week rota which sets out the core shifts in each EDT team members working pattern.

The EDT Service Lead is responsible for drawing up the rota and agreeing any swaps, changes, overtime and working sessions for as and when required.

The EDT Manager should be contacted to discuss any shift problems/issues, any staffing/rota problems.

Service Objectives

- a. Respond to out-of-hours referrals where it is judged that intervention is necessary to safeguard a child or adult in need or at risk, and where it is judged it would not be safe, appropriate, or lawful to delay that intervention until the next working day.
- b. Deal with referrals, which are not assessed as emergencies but where delay before intervention by day staff would be likely to cause deterioration in the welfare or safety of the subject of the referral.
- c. Fulfil statutory requirements and all London Borough of Lambeth (LBL) policies and procedures when responding to referrals.
- d. Deal with referrals in order of priority, and with regard to the possible consequences of delay.
- e. Aim to ensure that the "best value" response is made to all referrals.
- f. Ensure that referring agencies and individuals are kept fully informed as to Children and Adults Services responses and advised where there is unavoidable delay in dealing with referrals.
- g. Act in compliance with statutory requirements and all London Borough of Lambeth (LBL) policies and procedures in delivering a timely response to referrals made outside of office hours.
- h. Deploy internal Children and Adults Services resources and acquire resources from other service providers as necessary and appropriate to meet assessed service needs.
- i. Ensure that referring agencies and individuals are kept informed where there is unavoidable delay in dealing with referrals.

- j. Maintain sufficient knowledge of local authority and other services to be able to screen and re-direct referrals which are not appropriate for the EDT to respond to.
- k. Seek to foster good working relationships with all other out-of-hours agencies.
- l. Ensure that there are effective working relationships with day services.
- m. Negotiate clear responsibility for cases involving other local authorities, ensuring that LBL responsibilities are always fully discharged, whether by the EDT or another authority.
- n. Provide a service, which positively reflects LBL policies on equality and diversity, ensuring that services take account of issues of ethnicity, race, culture, disability, religion, sexuality, and gender.
- o. Ensure that all referrals made, and work carried out is clearly and fully recorded in line with LBL requirements, and to enable day staff to progress work promptly and effectively.
- p. Ensure that, where appropriate, senior officers are informed of referrals or incidents.
- q. Represent Children and Adults Services positively to service users and all other agencies and organisations, using delegated authority appropriately.

Service Standards

The EDT will meet the following service standards in line with guidance issued by the Regulatory Authority:

- a. Service users will receive a prompt and effective out of hours response, which is adequate to deal with the need referred and is sufficient to support service users until mainstream services can be provided, if necessary.
- b. The Children and Adults Departments will work collaboratively with other agencies, and Departments, to ensure a co-ordinated approach to the provision of emergency out of hours services.
- c. Out of hours assessments will be sufficient to determine the nature and extent of the response, which will then be provided promptly.
- d. Emergency out of hour's services will be sensitive to issues of race, religion, language, culture, gender and disability.
- e. EDT staff will be appropriately recruited, trained, deployed and supervised.
- f. The Children and Adults Departments will provide an organisational structure and management support to ensure the delivery of effective emergency out of hours services.

Referral Criteria into EDT

The EDT is principally responsible for providing an emergency service in situations where there is a real and immediate threat to life, safety, health, or liberty. Additionally, EDT will seek to provide a service where delay could cause deterioration in the welfare or safety of the subject of the referral.

It is therefore not appropriate to make referrals to the EDT for routine monitoring of service users or carers out of hours. The EDT cannot guarantee to be available for this purpose, which must be covered in general care planning for a case.

As outlined above, it will be unusual for day staff to make a referral for action, as the expectation is that day staff will normally complete work in which they are involved.

When day staff do need to make a referral, the worker should ring the EDT contact number, leaving a telephone number on which they are available after 17.00hrs and the EDT social worker on duty will contact them as soon as possible after coming on duty.

The EDT staff will ensure there are good operational links between the EDT and Day Services. Any issues with Day services or vice versa should be reported to the EDT Service Lead.

Communicating with the EDT

All EDT staff will contact the CAPITA OOH switchboard on 0207 926 5555 at the start of each shift to confirm whether they are covering Children and Adults or AMHP Service

Referrals can be made to the EDT service by members of the public, service users and their families and from other agencies. The Emergency Duty Social Workers will also provide support to Lambeth children/young people that are placed out of county.

All the EDT permanently employed staff are Advanced Practitioners and they will assess the degree of potential risk presented, taking into account our statutory duties and/or Directorate policy and whether a response can wait to the next working day. However, a response will be provided to any child at risk of significant harm.

The EDT duty social worker cannot take on volumes of work which has been referred during office hours. Calls which have come in before 17:00hrs (16:30hrs on a Friday) must be completed by the day team, other than in exceptional circumstances which will be covered based on exceptional circumstances.

For complex cases and child protection cases daytime social workers can contact the EDT Service Lead or the Service Manager for management oversight and guidance. Monday to Friday from 5pm to midnight either manager can provide management shift cover, their role will be providing case management oversight and not overall social work team management

Exceptional Circumstances

While maintaining the principle underlying this procedure that the EDT task is to only cover emergencies that arise outside office hours, there will be rare occasions when it will be necessary for a day social worker to ask the EDT duty social worker to follow up a case. For example, where an attempt to assess an urgent safeguarding situation has not been able to proceed and it is considered that the assessment cannot wait until the next working day.

EDT are able to support pieces of work that daytime services are managing out of hours, for example access to fostering placements.

Where it is necessary to ask the EDT duty social worker to act, this request must be made in direct discussion between the Day Team or Service Manager (or with agreement from the EDT Service Manager) and the EDT Service Lead so that it is entirely clear whether the EDT duty social worker can assist, what action has been agreed, and where the responsibility for the task lies. The EDT management will record this discussion on a Mosaic case note under management oversight.

The ability of the EDT Manager to accept the request will depend upon staffing levels, the nature of the intervention requested, and what other work is currently under way.

Services Available

The work of EDT focuses on:

Children in need of protection.

Children and young people who are missing from home.

Placements at risk of immediate breakdown.

Children and young people who are at risk of child sexual exploitation.

Young people requiring the Appropriate Adult service when being interviewed by the police (commissioned service that is requested via EDT);

Unaccompanied young people asylum seekers requiring initial age assessments/support.

Families in emergency/crisis situations.

If a daytime allocated social worker believes that a child/young people they are working with is at risk of being accommodated and require the EDT duty social worker support to prevent this, they need to provide a contingency plan to assist any decision making. The EDT duty social worker will offer emergency telephone support and provide advice to families dealing with crisis and emergency situations.

Placing children in foster care causes significant disruption to a child's life and is only used where absolutely necessary, however when children and young people need to be accommodated, this can only be done with the agreement of the on-call Senior Manager. This agreement will only be given in exceptional circumstances, when there is a serious and immediate risk of significant harm to the child and where no alternative family or friends are available to care for them.

If a foster carer believes that a placement is at risk of breaking down, they are advised to contact the child's social worker during normal office hours to devise a plan of support. If there is a crisis out of hours the EDT duty social worker will provide telephone support to the foster carer and young person to help manage difficulties until the next working day

Transferring Information from the Emergency Duty Team to Day Time Children's Social Care

All work carried out by the EDT duty social worker will be recorded and communicated to colleagues in the day service by 09:00 on the next working day, urgent cases will be followed up with an e-mail. On very rare occasions the EDT duty social worker may be so busy with duty work that this is not possible, but the most urgent matters will be prioritised and passed over as soon as practicable. The EDT social worker will use various systems to record activity undertaken within their shift.

When the EDT has a more detailed involvement in a case such as when a Strategy Discussion takes place or Need To Know document is required, this will be recorded on the relevant templates. Not all relevant multi agency information will be available to the EDT, but as much as possible will be included within these templates.

Decision Making Senior Manager on-call

Children's Social Care Senior managers are to make themselves available during their period on-call.

Should the Main Senior manager not be reachable the Backup on-call Duty manager shall be contacted.

Monday to Friday	5.00pm-9.00am the next working day
Saturday	9.00am- 9.00am Sunday
Sunday	9.00am- 9.00am Monday

Children's Social Care Senior managers operate an on-call rota and should be notified by Emergency Duty Staff in the following circumstances to give management oversight on;

- Any situation where a Child or Young Person accommodated suffers an injury serious enough to warrant medical attention or admission to hospital, this should include any incident of self-harm. This includes serious or persistent self-harming or attempted suicide.
- Any situation where a member of staff suffers an injury during the course of their work that requires medical attention or admission to hospital.
- Any situation that is likely to attract media coverage and disruptions in the local community;
- Any situation where staff on duty are considering calling the police in order to manage a situation or report a crime (on-call manager may be notified following the call if the call was made in an emergency).
- Any concern that a Child or Young Person is at risk of immediate and Significant Harm.
- Death of a Child or Young Person.

This is not an exhaustive list and there may be other serious circumstances that the member of staff on shift feels that the on-call manager should be contacted or informed immediately of.

Recording

All actions undertaken by EDT staff will be recorded on Mosaic and EDT report form/ AMHP report form. Recording will be compliant with GDPR principles of lawfulness, fairness, and transparency. Referrals will be logged on the EDT log to ensure all activity is captured. All reports will record the time and contact details of all persons contacted in the course of assessing actions needing to be taken. The relevant content of such contacts will be summarised and reasons for any decisions made will be stated.

Strategy Discussions

If a strategy meeting is held by the on-call OOH manager, then it is the Emergency Duty Social Workers responsibility to progress the OOH strategy outcome (when appropriate) and assign to the Mash Manager to ensure there's a smooth transition of information to day service to follow up the actions required to avoid duplication of information

Welfare Visits

Request to the out of hours service for visits are also received from the social work teams, and there is a clear criteria as to what can be passed to out of hours and these must be agreed with the team manager and approved by the Service manager.

These must be urgent matters that should not be left until the following working day and clearly demonstrate that the team had sought to action by the allocated social worker or own duty worker. It is the expectation that any work that comes in during the working day will be managed by the MASH / allocated social worker or duty team in their absence. Social Workers from the daytime are expected to run with these cases till 5pm.

After this point the daytime social worker can contact OOH via 0207 926 555 and ask for a case discussion with the OOH Manager regarding possibly handing the case over to OOH.

Additionally, an email must be sent to EDT@lambeth.gov.uk after a case discussion with the Service EDT Lead or Service Manager to explain the concerns and provide a clear contingency plan. If this information is emailed after 5pm a follow up phone call will need to be made on 0207 926 5555 to alert them to the email request. It is essential that Mosaic is kept up to date by the allocated Social Worker which identifies the families support networks and contact details should there be an emergency

OOH visits are not to be used to substitute visits from the allocated social worker or for visits that should have been completed during office hours. Nor can welfare visits be requested for on-going visits.

The welfare visits should only be emailed on the day for that night, they cannot be requested days in advance, if visits are for the weekend they should be emailed on the Friday of the weekend the visits are required

Support workers:

At times, support workers are required to support a child at home, in police custody, while a placement is being identified. This must be appropriately assessed to determine its safe to do so. The EDT worker can contact EDT Service Lead/SM on call to discuss.

EDT generally tend to use the following services:

Careline-**0208 656 7888**

D-Truimph- **T: 02039839633/M: 07365298856**

Quality Assurance

The EDT Team Manager will be responsible for developing and implementing a range of measures which ensure that the quality of the service provided by the EDT is of a high standard and routinely monitored. These measures will include the routine collection and analysis of agreed management information, regular audits of individual cases, and questionnaires for day staff and partner agencies about their satisfaction with the EDT service. Themes from any complaints and feedback received will be used to influence service developments.

An EDT officer will visit or otherwise engage with any child that comes to their attention where this is appropriate to ensure their safety or wellbeing and specifically where Police have exercised their powers of protection.

The EDT will aim to demonstrate a responsive service through responding to most referrals within 30 minutes and ensuring that appropriate teams are notified of follow up actions by 9.00am on the next working day in all cases.

The EDT seeks to be outcome focussed and EDT reports will be audited to ensure that clear decision making, and outcomes are recorded with a clear timeline of actions taken.

EDT social workers will consider actions that reflect principals of seeking least restrictive alternatives and take account of and record the wishes and feelings of service users who come to their attention whilst following clear legislative processes. The EDT social worker's assessment and rationale for decisions made will be clear in their report.

EDT staff will maintain an up-to-date training log including Lambeth mandatory training, yearly AMHP refresher training, and yearly Child Protection and Adult Safeguarding update training. CPD will be recorded in line with Social Work England Requirements and training and development will be discussed in supervision with plans made around any learning needs.

Social Work England Registration and Professional Standards will be maintained and followed.

Review of Operational Policy

The OOH protocol including emergency welfare check processes will be reviewed as and when it is deemed necessary by all agencies involved. All issues and proposed changes to the policy and/or process will be reported to the relevant Assistant Director(s) and other managers, as appropriate, within the Children Social Care Directorate.