



Centre for Professional Practice

Practice Briefing Note 83

Title:	Process for Responding to Complaints
Effective From:	6th November 2020
Practice Note:	<p>There is a need to improve the timeliness and quality of responses to complaints.</p> <p>The Complaints Team have made changes to the Complaints Process to increase the efficiency of the service's response to complaints. The changes include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✚ Senior managers being actively involved earlier on in the process; ✚ Regular reminders being sent to managers during the process; ✚ Heads of Service / Service Managers including outstanding responses to complaints as a standing item during team meetings / supervision, to ensure regular review of outstanding responses. <p>It is essential responses to complaints are responded to on time, and that time is set aside to achieve the due date. Should a response not be completed by the due date, Managers will be required to provide an explanation for this, and all data concerning response times will be shared with senior managers, and then with the Scrutiny Committee.</p> <p>1. <u>New Referral/Complaint</u></p> <p>An email with a complaint will be sent to the relevant Team Manager to respond to, copying in the Service Manager and Head of Service Personal Assistant (PA).</p> <p>NB: Managers must carry out an initial review of the complaint within 2 working days of receipt to decide, firstly if the complaint is for them to investigate, and secondly how much time is required to respond on time.</p> <p>2. <u>First Reminder</u></p> <p>A first reminder that the response is due will be sent five working days before the due date, and the Service Manager and PA will be copied in. Service Managers are expected to take an active role in monitoring and ensuring that the response is provided on time.</p>

3. Second Reminder

A second reminder will be sent three working days before the due date, and the Head of Service will also be copied in. At this stage, Heads of Service will be expected to take an active role in monitoring and ensuring that the response is provided on time.

4. Due Date Reminder

A due date reminder will be sent on the day the actual response is due, and all staff involved will be copied in.

If more time is required at this stage, the complainant should be contacted by the manager dealing with the complaint to agree a suitable timeframe for the response and inform the Complaints Team if a later response date has been agreed.

5. Overdue Reminders

Once a complaint becomes overdue, the Complaints Team will regularly chase responses from staff. Staff will be advised that as the response is overdue, they will be required to provide an explanation for the delay under one of the following headings:

Complex case
Multiple teams involved
Staff absence
Other urgent work
Other, specify

After two overdue reminders, if no update or explanation has been received, the Director of Childrens Services will be made aware of the outstanding response.

6. Complaints Management Training

Currently, the Complaints Team provide individual training for all managers, and assistance / advice / support with regards to complaints and responses. Moving forwards, a series of workshops will be developed and advertised. Details will be shared soon.

To view the full Complaints procedure please [click here](#).

**Authorised
by:**

SLT

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5th November 2020

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