

How to complain about Social Work Adult Services



**Falkirk
Health and Social Care
Partnership**



Falkirk Council

Social Work Adult Services

Social Work Adult Services aim to provide high quality services to all our service users. You are the best person to tell us:

- how we are doing
- what we can do to improve a service
- what problems you have experienced

We value complaints and use your feedback to help us to make sure that our services are the best they can be and ensure that we deliver our vision

“to enable people in the Falkirk HSCP area to live full and positive lives within supportive and inclusive communities”

If you are unhappy about a service, you have the right to complain. This leaflet tells you about our complaints procedure and how to make a complaint.

It also tells you what you can expect from us and our service standards and timescales.

What is a complaint?

We regard a complaint as any expression of dissatisfaction about Social Work Services action or lack of action, or about the standard of service provided by us, or on our behalf.

You can complain about things like:

- you feel the service you are receiving is poor
- you have been refused a service
- you think there has been an unnecessary delay in providing a service
- you believe our services may not meet your needs
- you believe that you have been harassed or discriminated against.

Our complaints procedure is designed to ensure that your complaint is dealt with promptly, efficiently and fairly.

What is not a complaint?

There are some things we can't deal with through our complaints handling procedure. These include:

- a routine first-time request for a service
- requests for compensation from the Council
- things that are covered by a right of appeal

If other procedures or rights of appeal can help you resolve your concerns, we will give information and advice to help you.

How do I complain?

Anyone can make a complaint to us, including the representative of someone who is dissatisfied with our service.

We can take complaints from a friend, relative, or an advocate, if you have given them your consent to complain for you.

You can complain in person at any office, by phone, in writing, email or via our complaints form, found at www.falkirk.gov.uk/complaints

Complaints received will be passed to the service. At this point it will be dealt with under the first stage of the complaints procedure (Front Line Resolution).

When complaining please tell us:

- your full name and address
- as much as you can about the complaint
- what has gone wrong
- how you want us to resolve the matter.



It is usually easier for us to resolve complaints if you make them quickly and directly to the service concerned. So please talk to a member of our staff at the service you are complaining about. Then they can try to resolve any problems on the spot.

Normally you must make your complaint within 6 months of:

- the event you want to complaint about, or
- finding out that you have a reason to complain but no longer than 12 months after the event itself.

In exceptional circumstances, we may be able to accept a complaint after the time limit. If you feel that the time limit should not apply to your complaint, please tell us why.

Getting help to make your complaint

If you would like help to put your complaint in writing, please contact your local Social Work office (contact details are at the back of this leaflet).

Don't forget:

Throughout the complaints investigation you have the right to:

- withdraw your complaint at any stage. Your complaint may still be investigated if it seems serious, but you will be informed of this.
- arrange for someone to accompany you or represent you. We can help you find someone to speak for you if necessary.



What happens when I have complained?

We will always tell you who is dealing with your complaint. Our complaints procedure has two stages.

Stage One:

Front Line Resolution

We aim to resolve complaints quickly and close to where we provided the service. This could mean an on-the-spot apology and explanation if something has clearly gone wrong, and immediate action to resolve the problem.

We will give you our decision at Stage One in five working days or less, unless there are exceptional circumstances.

If we can't resolve your complaint at this stage, we will explain why and tell you what you can do next. We might suggest that you take your complaint to Stage Two. You may choose to do this immediately or sometime after you get our initial decision.

Stage Two:

Investigation

Stage Two deals with two types of complaint: those that have not have been resolved at Stage One and those that are complex and require detailed investigation.

When using Stage Two we will:

- acknowledge receipt of your complaint within three working days
- discuss your complaint with you to understand why you remain dissatisfied and what outcome you are looking for
- give you a full response to the complaint as soon as possible and within 20 working days.

If our investigation will take longer than 20 working days, we will tell you. We will agree revised time scales with you and keep you updated on progress.

What if I'm still not satisfied?

If you still remain dissatisfied after we have looked into your complaint, you can submit your complaint to the Scottish Public Services Ombudsman. The Ombudsman may carry out an independent enquiry into the conduct of the Council in relation to your complaint. Before taking any action, the Ombudsman will normally expect that you have contacted the Council about your complaint and that they have been given ample opportunity to resolve the issue.

You can contact the Ombudsman at the following address:

Scottish Public Services Ombudsman
Freepost
SPSO
T: 0800 377 7330
W: www.spsso.org.uk

Please note: throughout the complaints process we will discuss with you the level of confidentiality that can be given to the proper investigation of your complaint. You can remain anonymous if you wish but this may limit the investigation into your complaint.

If you would like this information in another language, Braille, large print or audio tape please call local Social Work office 01324 506070 or email complaintsofficer.sw@falkirk.gov.uk.



Other agencies you can contact

The Care Inspectorate

Some of the services delivered by Social Work Services (either directly or on our behalf) are also regulated by the Scottish Commission for the Regulation of Care (the Care Inspectorate).

These services include, day care, residential care and respite care.

If you are dissatisfied with the standard of care offered by these services then you can complain to the Care Inspectorate as well as making a complaint to us:

The Care Inspectorate
Compass House
11 Riverside Drive
DUNDEE
T: 01382 207100
W: www.careinspectorate.com

Scottish Social Services Council

If you have a complaint against a registered social worker or other registered social care worker, you can contact the Scottish Social Services Council at:

Scottish Social Services Council
Compass House
11 Riverside Drive
DUNDEE
T: 0345 6030891
W: www.sssc.uk.com



NHS Forth Valley

Some services may now be delivered by integrated health and social care teams. We will let you know who will lead on your complaint and provide a response.

You can complain through this procedure or you can complain in person at the place where you received care, treatment or advice, or where the incident that you want to complain about happened. You can also complain by phone, in writing, by email or by using NHS Forth Valley online complaints form.

NHS Forth Valley Patient Relations and Complaints Service
Forth Valley Royal Hospital
Stirling Road
Larbert FK5 4WR
t: 01324 566660
e: fv-ubh.complaints@nhs.net

Social Work Adult Services Offices

Please contact your local Social Work office if you need advice or assistance. The offices are open Monday to Friday 9am – 5pm.

East Locality; Braes, Bo'ness and Grangemouth
t: 01324 506070
e: information.team@falkirk.gov.uk

West Locality; Denny, Bonnybridge and Stenhousemuir
t: 01324 506070
e: information.team@falkirk.gov.uk

Central Locality; Falkirk, Camelon and Larbert
t: 01324 506070
e: information.team@falkirk.gov.uk

Quick guide to our complaints procedure

Complaints procedure

You can make your complaint in person, by phone by email or in writing.

We have a two-stage complaints procedure. We will always try to deal with your complaint quickly. But if it is clear that the matter will need a detailed investigation, we will tell you and keep you updated on our progress.



Stage One - Frontline resolution

We will always try to resolve your complaint quickly, within five working days if we can.

If you are dissatisfied with our response, you can ask to consider your complaint at Stage Two.



Stage Two - Investigation

We will look at your complaint at this stage if you are dissatisfied with our response at Stage One. We also look at some complaints immediately at this stage, if it is clear that they are complex or need detailed investigation.

We will acknowledge your complaint within three working days. We will give you our decision as soon as possible. This will be after no more than 20 working days unless there is clearly a good reason for needing more time.



The Scottish Public Services Ombudsman

If, after receiving our final decision on your complaint, you remain dissatisfied with our decision or the way we handled your complaint, you can ask the SPSO to consider it.

We will tell you how to do this when we send you our final decision.



**Falkirk
Health and Social Care
Partnership**

Dec 2020