



# A Farther's Child Services CIC

## Dissatisfaction, comments policy and Procedure

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### 1.0 Policy

This Policy is to ensure that the people using our service have a clear idea of how to raise their expressions of dissatisfaction whenever they may occur. If our service does not meet your expectations, then we want to understand how we can make sure that we do not fall short when you next engage with our service. If or when it becomes necessary, we will support our service user base to raise their concerns if necessary.

#### 1.1 Introduction

A Father's Child Services CIC (AFCS CIC) is committed to ensuring that Service Users or others acting on their behalf, have their comments and Dissatisfaction listened to and acted on effectively and can be confident that they will not be discriminated against for making a dissatisfaction.

This is because we comply with the regulations and will:

- Ensure that we have systems in place to deal with comments and dissatisfaction, including providing service users with information about that system.
- Support Service Users or others acting/advocating on their behalf to make comments and Dissatisfaction.
- Consider fully, respond appropriately and resolve, where possible, any comments and Dissatisfaction.

Service Users and their representatives are assured that concerns and Dissatisfaction will be dealt with quickly and sympathetically. Staff in the organisation welcome comments and Dissatisfaction when the level of service delivered does not meet the needs or expectations of the service user or where other concerns and Dissatisfaction have been identified. We also welcome any feedback that may be positive that can help us to reinforce the delivery of adequate services and elements that the people using our service find useful.

#### 1.2 Policy Statement

We believe that Service Users, staff and visitors should be provided with a safe environment which embraces all aspects of their life. This includes being assured that on any occasion where the service standard falls below that which could reasonably be expected, there are systems in place to address this.

We are committed to this in relation to the management of comments and Dissatisfaction by the following:

Service Users and those acting on their behalf can be confident that their comments and Dissatisfaction are listened to and dealt with effectively because:

- There are clear procedures followed in practice, monitored and reviewed, for receiving, handling, considering and responding to comments and Dissatisfaction, and a named contact who is accountable for doing so.
- The Dissatisfaction process is available, understood and well-publicised, and reflects established principles of good dissatisfaction handling.

The process will ensure:

- a. That the details of the dissatisfaction, and the desired outcome, have been properly understood
- b. That advice and advocacy support is available to those who wish or need such support is available or they can be signposted too.
- c. That what is required to resolve the dissatisfaction, and the likely timescale, is explained.
  - Investigations are both proportionate and sufficiently thorough.
  - A documented audit trail of the steps taken and the decisions reached is kept, for as long as necessary under data protection and GDPR regulations.
  - Consideration of the dissatisfaction is undertaken by staff who are competent to address the issues raised, provide honest explanations that are based on facts and include the reasons/rationale for the decisions made.
  - Whenever possible, dissatisfaction are reviewed by someone not involved in the events leading to the dissatisfaction. (Board member optional)
  - Comments and Dissatisfaction are investigated and resolved to the satisfaction of the

person raising the dissatisfaction unless:

- a. The dissatisfaction falls outside of the remit of the services responsibility (I.E. The Information Commissioner may need to be involved after our initial response, or other governing body)
- b. The dissatisfaction cannot be upheld. Where this is the case a rationale will be provided.
  - The Service has clear procedures followed in practice, monitored and reviewed for dealing with unreasonably persistent complainants in a fair and consistent manner, but ensures that the point they make is properly considered.
  - The manager encourages and supports a culture of openness that ensures any comment or dissatisfaction is listened to and acted on
  - The service ensures that a full record of the dissatisfaction is logged in line with approved procedures.
  - The information from Dissatisfaction is used to identify non-compliance, or any risk of non-compliance, with the regulations and to decide what will be done to return to compliance.
  - The person knows how to contact external bodies (e.g. Birmingham City Council Customer Care & Service User if funded by the council, their referrer or relevant professional bodies such as The British Association Of Counselling and Psychotherapy (BACP)

The service will:

- Produce a summary of Dissatisfaction at a time in a format set out by the relevant provision we supply services for and within the specified timeframe

Service users benefit from a service which:

- Takes into account relevant guidance, including that issued by funders, The Local Safeguarding authority, The BACP and other organisations which may from time to time be published.

Service users or those acting on their behalf are able to use the comments and Dissatisfaction

process because:

- They are treated in a manner that respects their human rights and diversity in a fair and equal way.
- They know how to obtain or access information about the Dissatisfaction system

- Any comments and Dissatisfaction are dealt with in a sensitive and timely manner by taking into account the individual circumstances
- Comments and Dissatisfaction can be made either verbally, through sign language with an interpreter or in writing.
- Where they lack the confidence or capacity to make a dissatisfaction, staff help them in a way that they find the most supportive. Alternatively, the manager accepts comments and Dissatisfaction made by acting on their behalf.
- Making a dissatisfaction will not cause them to be discriminated against or have any negative effect on their service provision, treatment or support.
- They are informed of the timescales and process that the provider will follow in responding to their dissatisfaction and be kept informed of progress.
- That they can ask the social local advisory services to assist them in making a dissatisfaction where this applies. E.G. The Citizens Advice Bureau
- They know the steps they can take if they are not satisfied with the findings or outcome once the dissatisfaction has been responded to, and are advised of their right to refer the matter to the next stage of the Dissatisfaction system this may be whichever applies. E.G:
- The Organisations Non-Executive/Independent Advisory Group Board
- An accrediting body
- The Local Government Ombudsman/Governing body

We recognise that there is a fine line between a “grumble”, “a comment” and “a dissatisfaction”. Service users and their representatives do not need to make “a formal dissatisfaction” for their dissatisfaction to be acted upon.

All Dissatisfaction will be acted upon quickly and effectively.

We recognise Dissatisfaction are not a personal criticism and will ensure that Dissatisfaction are seen as an opportunity to improve the level and standard of services being provided. We will endeavour to resolve all Dissatisfaction in house but recognise that this may not always be possible. If any external support is gained to resolve a dissatisfaction, the investigating person will be working in full compliance with the Information Commissioners Office guidance. Our service will supply, on request a copy of the Dissatisfaction procedure to any Service User or anyone acting on their behalf.

### 1.3 External Contact details

Local Government Ombudsman

Tel: 0300 061 0614

Email: [advice@lgo.org.uk](mailto:advice@lgo.org.uk)

Internet: [www.lgo.org.uk](http://www.lgo.org.uk)

Customer Care & Citizen Involvement Team

Adults & Communities Directorate

Birmingham City Council

PO Box 1645

Birmingham

B2 2DG

Tel: 0121 303 5161

Email: [customer-care-team@birmingham.gov.uk](mailto:customer-care-team@birmingham.gov.uk)

British Association of Counselling & Psychotherapy (BACP)

BACP House

15 St John's Business Park

Lutterworth

Leicestershire

LE17 4HB

Email: [bacp@bacp.co.uk](mailto:bacp@bacp.co.uk)

Telephone: 01455 883300

Twitter: [@BACP](https://twitter.com/BACP)

Mental Health First Aid England

21 Prescott St

Whitechapel  
London E1 8BB  
Website: <https://mhfaengland.org/>  
Telephone: 020 3928 0760  
Contact Page: <https://mhfaengland.org/mhfa-centre/contact-us/>

## 2.0 Dissatisfaction Procedure

### 2.1 Publicising the Process

Service managers/allocated investigators are responsible for making sure that all service users/ and or their representatives are aware that the service has a Dissatisfaction procedure. This should be achieved by:

- An inclusion/reference in the company constitution
- A notice in the general office space
- Inclusion of Dissatisfaction analysis in meetings, and reports
- Ensuring that anyone who wants to raise a dissatisfaction is provided with a copy of the full procedure or quick guide.

The style and format of the Dissatisfaction should be easily understood by those that are using it, or those it is aimed at.

#### Informal Dissatisfaction

On occasions when a formal dissatisfaction is received a record should be made of it and the steps taken to resolve the issues raised.

Record by electronic log in customer/service user file and company database to monitor Dissatisfaction, make a call by phone to customer/service user acknowledging receipt and discussing the concerns.

The manager should seek to resolve informal Dissatisfaction in a timely and effective manner. Where this does not happen to the satisfaction of the complainant, they should be offered the opportunity to elevate the informal dissatisfaction to become a “formal dissatisfaction”.

### 2.3 Formal Dissatisfaction

Formal Dissatisfaction where possible should be made in writing to the manager of the service. Dissatisfaction may also be made verbally but should be recorded and acted on as if they were written.

Where manager receives a formal dissatisfaction or a dissatisfaction is escalated to a formal dissatisfaction the manager or senior management team must:

- Make and log the dissatisfaction formally
- Contact the complainant within 7 calendar days
- Provide in this contact a guide as to how long it will take to get a full response (28 days)
- Inform them who is investigating the dissatisfaction
- Give a summary of the dissatisfaction as it is understood
- Complete the investigation within 28 calendar days
- If the dissatisfaction will not be resolved within 28 days, advise the complainant in writing of the reason why and the new likely timeframe.
- Inform the complainant that they have the choice to refer the dissatisfaction at any time.

On completion of the investigation the Service managers/allocated investigators should write to the complainant, the written response should identify:

- The nature of the dissatisfaction
- The findings of the investigation
- Conclusion
- Action plan
  - Action required now
  - By whom
  - Timescale
  - Required outcome
  - How will this be known/evidenced
- Any further right of appeal/dissatisfaction
- The right to have their dissatisfaction looked at by a more senior manager in the organisation (e.g., Director of Adult/Children's Services/External Board member.)

## 2.4 Referring to an External Body

Where the complainant remains dissatisfied with the outcome of the dissatisfaction or any aspect of the dissatisfaction handling process, they have the right to refer to the Local Government: Birmingham City Council, or any of the professional bodies the company is registered too. (For vulnerable children/Adults the local authority may be appropriate.)

Birmingham City Council  
Council House  
Victoria Square  
Birmingham  
B1 1BB

Also see page 5-6 above.

## 2.5 Summary of dissatisfaction

The Manager is responsible for ensuring that a complete comprehensive record of all Dissatisfaction is kept within the service.  
We should also log the numbers of Dissatisfaction, general content and outcomes of the dissatisfaction on a regular basis and discussed with the board on an annual basis.  
The organisation maybe required to make available to relevant external bodies a summary of Dissatisfaction arising over the past 12 months.

## 2.6 Training

Induction training should include information about Dissatisfaction handling.  
Ongoing training should aim to ensure that staff understand the Dissatisfaction system is a positive tool for identifying opportunities for improvement. Dissatisfaction should not be seen as a criticism, either on a personal level or criticism of the service in general. What may appear trivial to one person may be seen as a major issue for another. Staff need to be aware of anyone who identifies as having a disability so that they can be supported to obtain a copy of the Dissatisfaction policy in a suitable format.

V5	December 2022	M. Kelly
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