

Complaints Procedure

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Help us to improve our services

We welcome feedback from all service users and carers. This is a valuable way to help us improve our services to you.

It is important to let us know when things are going wrong and going well. Please use the online service to give us your suggestions and compliments, as well as complaints.

We aim to:

- take a more flexible approach towards handling individual complaints and concerns, which focuses on the needs and wishes of the people involved
- simplify things so that it is much easier for people to share their experiences and for the organisations concerned to respond
- make sure that people's experience help improve services

Your right to complain

We provide a wide range of services to many people, so sometimes things can go wrong. At times, we may make an error or refuse to provide a service that you or your relative thinks you should get.

If this happens, you have a right to discuss your views with a manager and to receive a written response.

We want to know what has gone wrong; because we care about the quality of service we provide or is provided on our behalf.

After completing our investigation, we will write to you:

- explaining how the matter has been resolved
- with details of what appropriate action has been taken to put things right
- letting you know who to contact if you remain dissatisfied.



Waltham Forest

www.walthamforest.gov.uk

There are a number of instances where a complaint can't be dealt with using the council's complaints process.

This is usually due to statutory or legal reasons

Confidentiality

We keep information about people who use our services; however, your personal information is only ever given to people who need it. Under the Data Protection Act 2018, you have a right to see the information we keep about you, whether held on computer or on paper.

You can find out more details about this on our website at: [Your data privacy rights | London Borough of Waltham Forest](#)

Safeguarding

Where a complaint involves safeguarding concerns, we may refer the matter to the relevant social work or safeguarding team for them to consider before we accept it as a complaint. We will let you know if this is the case.

You can find out more about safeguarding adults, on our website at:

[Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub \(MASH\) | London Borough of Waltham Forest](#)

How to make a complaint

All complaints should be made online via our website at: [Complaints and compliments | London Borough of Forest](#)

However, it may be possible to sort out the problem by talking directly to the people you normally deal with or to their manager; most problems and misunderstandings can be sorted out quickly this way.

We can only look into complaints if they are made within 12 months of the date on which the subject of the complaint occurred or came to the attention of the person making the complaint. If it is over 12 months, we will decide whether to investigate the matter or not, and let you know either way.

Via our website at [Complaints and compliments | London Borough of Forest](#)

Local Resolution

When we receive your complaint, the Complaints Team will acknowledge this within three working days. We will try our best to resolve your complaint; but some requests may be unrealistic or beyond the Council's role and responsibilities.

We will let you know how long it will take to fully investigate and respond to your complaint. Most complaints are dealt with within 20 working days, but we aim to deal with the matter as swiftly as possible. Some complaints may take longer, for example, if we need to reassess you or get more details from your GP or hospital consultant.

Sometimes, depending on the type and complexity of the complaint, we use independent investigators or seek a second opinion from an independent assessor; but the Complaints Team will discuss this with you, if this is the case.

Shortly after receiving our email, the person investigating your complaint may contact you to introduce themselves and discuss the complaint with you to see how they can resolve it.

Once the investigation is completed, the manager will write to you with the outcome of your complaint. They will explain whether or not they have been able to achieve the outcome you requested. If you are dissatisfied with the outcome, you have the right to contact the Local Government Ombudsman

Complaining on behalf of someone else

If you are acting on someone else's behalf we must have their written consent allowing you to make the complaint, or a copy of the registered Lasting Power of Attorney if they no longer have capacity to make decisions for themselves.

Complaints should be made via the Council's website.

However, if this is not possible for any reason, you can send a letter to:

Complaints Team
Waltham Forest Town Hall
Forest Road
London
E17 4JF

How to contact Adult Social Care

Adults Screening
Tel: 020 8496 3000
www.walthamforest.gov.uk

Hospital Social Work Team
(Whipps Cross)
Tel: 020 8539 5522
<https://www.bartshealth.nhs.uk/whipps-cross>

North East London NHS
Foundation Trust (NELFT)
Mental Health Services
0300 555 1200

Learning Disability Team
020 521 0337

<https://www.nelft.nhs.uk/>

Complaining about home care agencies and residential care homes

If your complaint is about a home care agency or a private residential care home, that Adult Social Care has commissioned, we will send your complaint to the registered manager asking them to respond to the complaint first; either directly to you or via us.

Each provider has their own complaints procedure as required by the Care Quality Commission. The provider is responsible for dealing with your complaint in the first instance.

If you remain dissatisfied with the outcome, contact the Social Care Complaints Team. Our Contracts and Commissioning Team is made aware of all complaints received about providers and discuss the outcome of these as part of their monitoring visits.

Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman

If you remain dissatisfied with the final response and outcome of your complaint or the way Adult Social Care has handled the matter, you have a right to take your complaint to the Local Government Ombudsman. Please see their website at: <https://www.lgo.org.uk/make-a-complaint>

More ways to raise concerns

You can discuss your concerns about any council service with your local Councillor or Member of Parliament at any time. You can find out who your local Councillor is by asking at your local library or calling Waltham Forest Direct on 020 8496 3000.

Details about Councillors and local MPs can also be found on the council's website at: [Your local councillors and MPs | London Borough of Waltham Forest](#)

Other places to ask for help

Advocacy and advice

Citizens Advice Waltham Forest
www.citizensadvice.org.uk/local/waltham-forest/

General Information

For information and advice about adult social care services, please see our directory at: <https://www.walthamforest.gov.uk/adult-social-care>

Full details about the Adult Social Care complaints legislation can be found at:

[The Local Authority Social Services and National Health Service Complaints \(England\) Regulations 2009 \(legislation.gov.uk\)](#)