



KNOWSLEY
SAFEGUARDING
ADULTS BOARD

Escalation Policy

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Contents

1. Introduction
2. Stages of Resolution
3. Additional Notes
4. Escalation Policy Flowchart

1. Introduction

1.1 Effective working together depends on an open and honest approach to relationships between agencies. Problem resolution is an integral part of professional co-operation in a multi-agency approach to safeguarding adults.

1.2 Occasionally situations arise when workers within one agency feel that the actions, inaction or decisions of another agency do not adequately safeguard an adult. Such situations have been highlighted in a number of case reviews.

This inter-agency policy defines the process for resolving such professional differences and should be read alongside the local adult safeguarding procedures and relevant internal policies on escalating matters in dispute.

1.3 Disagreements can arise in a number of areas, but are most likely to arise around:

- **Levels of need.**
- **Roles and responsibilities.**
- **The need for action.**
- **The progress of plans and communication.**

1.4 Where professionals consider that the practice of other professionals is placing adults at risk of harm, they must be assertive, act swiftly and ensure that they challenge the relevant professionals in line with this policy.

- **The safety of individual adults is the paramount consideration in any professional activity.**
- **Resolution should be sought within the shortest timescale possible to ensure the adult is protected.**
- **As a guide, professionals should attempt to resolve differences through discussion within one working week or a timescale that protects the adult from harm (whichever is shortest).**
- **Disagreements should be resolved at the earliest possible opportunity.**

1.5 If an adult is thought to be at risk of immediate harm, the designated safeguarding lead in your agency should be informed immediately.

1.6 Any worker who feels that a decision is not safe or is inappropriate should initially consult their supervisor/manager to clarify their thinking, if required. Those concerned should be able to evidence the nature and source of the concerns and must keep a record of all discussions.

1.7 Individuals may wish to refer to this policy for their organisation to clarify the approach required.

1.8 Concerns relating to decisions, suspected wrongdoing, or dangers at work within an agency, should be raised in line with each agencies' policies for dealing with such matters, including but not limited to those setting out the arrangements for 'whistleblowing'.

2. Stages of Resolution

2.1 Stage One: Discuss with the other worker

2.2 Those individuals who are unable to reach an agreement should have a discussion to resolve the problem. This discussion must take place as soon as possible and could be a telephone conversation or a 'face to face' meeting. It should be recognised that differences in status and/or experience may affect the confidence of some workers to pursue this if they are not supported by their respective agency.

2.3 Stage Two: Escalate to line manager

2.4 If the problem is not resolved, the worker should contact their immediate supervisor / manager within their own agency who should have a discussion with the equivalent supervisor / manager in the other agency.

2.5 If the case involves an adult who is already subject to an adult safeguarding plan, prior to any dispute, then this should be brought to the attention of the safeguarding lead with responsibility for that plan.

2.6 Stage Three: Escalate to senior managers

2.7 If the problem cannot be resolved at Stage Two, then the supervisor / manager should report the situation to their respective manager or named / designated lead for safeguarding. These two managers must attempt to resolve the professional differences through discussion.

2.8 If the disagreement cannot be resolved at this stage, then the expectation is that escalation should continue through the appropriate tiers of management within each organisation until the matter is resolved. The respective agency members of the Knowsley Safeguarding Adults Board (KSAB) should be engaged in seeking resolution before the case is ultimately raised with the Chair of the KSAB. N.B. If either agency involved in the escalation does not have direct representation, then this should be referred to the KSAB business unit, who will arrange proxy representation on the resolution panel (see below).

2.9 Stage Four: Resolution by the KSAB Chair

2.10 If it has not been possible to resolve the professional differences between the agencies concerned (and after the KSAB agency members have been involved), the matter should then, as a very last resort, be referred by the agency concerned to the Chair of the KSAB, via the KSAB Business Unit. The chair may then either seek to resolve the issue directly with their relevant senior managers or convene a Resolution Panel.

2.11 The agency raising the dispute must e-mail the details through to the KSAB Business Unit who will raise the matter with the chair at: ksab@knowsley.gov.uk

2.12 Any Resolution Panel must be composed of senior officers from three agencies who are members of the KSAB. The senior officers should, as far as practicable, include the agencies engaged in the escalation process.

2.13 The Panel will receive representations from those involved in the dispute and will collectively resolve the professional differences concerned, by the application of relevant legislation, policy and best practice. The welfare of the individual and their views will be the primary concern, in line with the principles of Making Safeguarding Personal.

3. Additional Notes

3.1 At all stages of the process, actions and decisions must be recorded in writing within the adult's records and shared with relevant personnel, which should include the worker who raised the initial concern.

4. Escalation Policy Flowchart

