



How to Make a Complaint

What is a complaint?

A complaint is an expression of disapproval or dissatisfaction in the service or activities provided to the people we support.

Who can make a complaint?

- Anyone who receives a service from Avenues;
- Anyone who has been refused a service by Avenues; or
- Someone acting on their behalf;
- Family;
- Friends;
- Professionals
- The general public
- Anyone who wants to make a complaint about a matter they believe is the responsibility of Avenues, except Avenues employees who have a separate procedure.

Avenues encourage complainants to take responsibility for their complaint and do not encourage anonymous complaints.

Who do I complain to?

You can complain to an employee.

How can I complain?

You can complain by:

- Letter;
- Telephone;
- Email;
- Verbally;
- CD;
- Pictures and symbols.

What happens next?

Your complaint will be listened to and dealt with fairly. You will not be penalised or treated badly because you have made a complaint.

The person taking your complaint will note down the following details and report immediately to the Complaints officer who is based in the Chief Executive's Office:

- Date and time of your complaint;
- Your name, address and telephone number;
- Details of your complaint.

What will the Complaints Officer do?

The Complaints Officer will:

- Contact you within 3 working days to acknowledge your complaint;

- Assign an investigating officer to look at your complaint; this will always be a senior manager or director;
- Ensure that you receive a written response within 28 days (or 14 days for Children and Young People's Services)
- Ensure that you receive as much information as possible about the investigation, if this is not possible the Complaints Officer will tell you why;
- Ensure that the relevant Director knows about your complaint;
- Report your complaint and any outcomes to the Group Management Committee at their next meeting;
- Send a copy of any correspondence and outcomes to the service manager to be held confidentially in the complaints file;
- A hard copy will be held confidentially at head office by the Complaints Officer.

What will the Investigating Officer do?

This person may contact you and may ask to meet with you and any other people that they feel may be relevant to your complaint. The Investigating officer will take notes and send them to the complaints Officer.

What if the Investigating Officer resolves my complaint straight away?

The Investigating Officer will write all the details down and send it to the Complaints Officer.

What if I am not happy with the outcome?

You can complain directly to the Care Quality Commission (CQC)

Care Quality Commission (CQC)

Citygate

Gallowgate

Newcastle-Upon-Tyne

NE1 4PA

Telephone: 03000 616 161

enquiries@cqc.org.uk

You can also complain to Social Services in the area that you live in.

If you are not happy with the response you get from Avenues, CQC or Social Services, you can contact the [Local Government Ombudsmen Advice Team](#)

Telephone: 0300 061 0614 or 0845 602 1893

Children and Young People's Services

For services for Children and Young People a request for an independent investigation can be made by the complainant to the Complaints Officer at any point. The Complaints Office will ensure that someone who does not work for Avenues is appointed to look at the complaint. This person will make recommendations as to how the complaint should be dealt with within 1 month of being appointed.