

How to make a complaint

Complaints can be made at any time within twelve months of the case closure either:

- in person
- by telephone
- in writing
- by email
- by text

to the manager of the seAp team concerned.

If you need to find out who that is, use the contact details given in this leaflet.

The manager will respond to your complaint within seven days of the complaint being received.



Making a complaint

If you have a complaint about our services or staff, this leaflet helps to explain our complaints procedure





Complaints Procedure

seAp is committed to providing the best possible advocacy services to those who use and commission them. However, we recognise that there may be times where a service or practice falls short of the quality expected. Therefore, if you have a complaint to make, we would like to hear about it.

We will ensure that your complaint is thoroughly investigated and that where your complaint shows seAp has fallen short of our high standards, or we need to make changes to the way we work, we will be clear on what action we will take.

Our complaint investigation process will make sure anyone who makes a complaint is listened to.

We will keep you informed about the process of your complaint and any actions arising from it.

All complaints will be recorded on our database so that we can learn and make changes where necessary.

Any complaint needs to be made within twelve months of the case closure.

Key Principles

There are key principles which will be followed during all stages of the complaints procedure:

- **Independent investigation:** Where a formal investigation is appropriate, in the interests of impartiality and transparency, this will be conducted by a manager or appointed staff member who is not connected to the complaint.
- **Support and Advocacy:** Anyone wishing to make a complaint will be supported by an advocate at any stage of the procedure, independent of the investigation, if they wish.
- **Timely response:** seAp undertakes to respond promptly to any complaints received about our services, in line with timescales shown in the 4 Stages of Resolution (right).
- **Protection of confidentiality:** We will ensure that confidentiality is maintained for both the complainant and any staff member concerned, as far as possible.

Contact Us

seAp Advocacy

P.O. Box 375, Hastings, TN34 9HU

Tel: 0330 440 9000

Text: 80800 start message with SEAP

Email: info@seap.org.uk

Web: www.seap.org.uk

Opening hours Mon: 10am - 5pm*

Tue - Fri: 9am - 5pm*

* except bank holidays

We aim to respond to answerphone messages within 1 working day

4 Stages of Resolution

An informal discussion will be offered between you and the manager of the Advocate concerned. Details of the complaint will be clarified and resolutions explored.

Stage 1 (if not resolved informally)

If you remain dissatisfied with the informal response, the Team Manager will investigate the circumstances of the complaint and you will receive a response within 3 weeks, detailing the outcome of the complaint received and any actions identified.

Stage 2 (if not resolved at stage 1)

If you remain dissatisfied with the Stage 1 response, you may request a Stage 2 investigation within one month. Under Stage 2, the complaint will be escalated to a senior manager. The senior manager will respond in writing within 3 weeks, detailing the outcome of their investigation and any actions identified.

Stage 3 (if not resolved at stage 2)

If you remain dissatisfied, you can request that your complaint be considered under Stage 3 of the complaints procedure. This request should be made within 1 month of the Stage 2 response and should outline which aspects of the response you are unhappy with and why. The CEO or a member of seAp's Board of Trustees will review the circumstances of the complaint and the responses to Stage 1 and 2 and will respond to you in writing within 3 weeks, detailing the outcome of their investigation and any actions identified.

Stage 4 (if not resolved at stage 3)

Where the complaint relates to a Local Authority commissioned service, you may at any stage refer your complaint to your local Council. If you remain dissatisfied with the Council's response, you may contact the Local Government & Social Care Ombudsman (LGO) and ask for it to be reviewed. www.lgo.org.uk