

and procedures of a Review Child Protection Conference.

The Panel might also consider any other specific issues and concerns they may feel to be relevant and communicate these to all appropriate agencies who are involved with your child and yourself.

Reconvened Conference:

Should the Conference be recommended to take place again, the Chair must make sure that all those who attend understand the decisions reached by the Panel.

Further Challenge:

In the case that the Panel decides that relevant procedures were followed and the decision reached was reasonable, no further action will be taken.

Under exceptional circumstances and at the discretion of the Complaints Manager and the Child Protection Manager, the Panel might be asked to meet again to review any remaining and clearly specified concerns.

If you are still unhappy with the outcome of your complaint, you can take this to the Local Government Ombudsman or a Judicial Review (the Complaints Manager can provide you with details of how to go about doing this).

Relevant Contacts if you wish to complain regarding a Child Protection Conference:

All Child Protection Conference Chairs are based at:

- ❖ **Child Protection & Safeguarding Service**, Silver Birch House, Uplands Business Park, Blackhorse Lane, Walthamstow, London E17 5SD – 0208 496 8270
- ❖ **Child Protection Manager**, address as above Tel. 0208 496 3245
- ❖ **Complaints Manager**, Children & Families Service Children Services Silver Birch House, Uplands Business Park, Blackhorse Lane, Walthamstow, London E17 5SD, Tel: 020 8496 3249

Waltham Forest Local Safeguarding Children Board

COMPLAINTS BY PARENTS REGARDING CHILD PROTECTION CONFERENCES

If you are unhappy with the way the conference is run or the way you are being treated you should speak to the Chair about this either during or immediately after the conference. If you feel the Chair is unable to deal with your complaint to your satisfaction, you should write to the Chair within 28 days of receiving the minutes (notes) from the conference. You can ask your child's social Worker to help you do this, if you want.

Please note that if you make a complaint, the complaints process will not, in itself, change a decision made by a Child Protection Conference. One possible outcome is that the Conference is asked to meet again under a different Chair to reconsider your child's case. Other outcomes might be that a review conference is arranged earlier than planned to look again at your child's case or that the current situation is left as it is. You will be informed of this decision.

If you want to complain about the conduct of, or the report submitted by a particular agency (i.e Health, School) you should ask that agency for its complaints procedures and use these to make your complaint.



Written Complaints: PROCESS

Stage 1:

When the Chair of the Conference receives your letter of complaint, he or she will inform the local authority designated children's complaints officer, relevant social work team manager and all professionals who attended the Conference

You must submit your complaint within 28 days. Only in exceptional circumstances will complaints be considered, beyond this limit.

Once your complaint has been received, the Chair will arrange to meet you, within 7 working days. You can bring a friend or relative to support you at this meeting if you wish. The meeting must be minuted, and you will be discussing in a detail following issues:

- Making sure that you fully understand the child protection process
- Exploring and clarifying the grounds and nature of your complaint
- Developing a clear understanding of what you would like to achieve
- Making sure that you are fully aware what can be and what can not be achieved through this process
- Exploring and collecting all relevant information available

The Chair will write to you within next 7 working days including the notes from the meeting. He or she will also explain the options available if you want to take the complaint further.

Stage 2:

If you are unsatisfied with the outcome of Stage 1, you will have up to 28 days from the receipt of the letter you received from the Chair to inform the Complaints Manager. You should explain, in writing, that you are still not satisfied, and your reasons for this.

Within 28 days of receipt of your letter, the Complaints Manager, in partnership with the local authority Child Protection Manager will arrange a meeting of a panel, made of minimum 3 members of the Local Safeguarding Children's Board to meet to consider your complaint. At least 2 of the panel members will be drawn from Children's Social Services, Police or Health. These individuals will have had *no previous* or *present direct* involvement in management of the case. The representative of the agency who has had the least direct contact with you and your child will chair this meeting.

The Complaints Manager and Child Protection Manager will provide you with the following documents:

- ❖ A formal, written request to participate in the meeting
- ❖ Copies of relevant Conference minutes and reports
- ❖ Stage 1 notes and all relevant correspondence
- ❖ A list of the names and contact details of all those involved in the meeting (including the Conference Chair, all professionals and your family).

The Complaints Manager will be responsible for keeping in contact with you throughout, and will also act as an advisor to the Panel on the process they must follow.

The Panel meeting will consider whether:

- ❖ Relevant inter-agency procedures have been appropriately followed
- ❖ Any decision being disputed followed reasonably from the processes undertaken and information presented

The Panel will:

- ❖ Listen to your complaint directly from you or your child (This can be presented by yourself, in writing or other form of communication). It will also listen to the views the Conference Chair and any other relevant person.
- ❖ Consider any written documents and paperwork available to it.
- ❖ Reach a decision.
- ❖ Discuss and agree the content of the letter they will send you or your child.

Once the Panel has reached a decision, a conformation letter will be sent to you within 7 working days of the meeting taking pace. This and will set out:

- ❖ The membership of the Panel
- ❖ The decision made, with clear information about how the decision was reached.

The Panel can make a recommendation for the Conference to take place again, under a different Chair if:

- ❖ The procedures relating to the Conference were not followed correctly and this was the material of the complaint

Or

- ❖ The procedures were followed correctly, but the decision of the Conference was unreasonable

Should the Panel agree that the procedures relating to the Conference were followed correctly, and the decision reached was reasonable, it must confirm that this decision stands and will be reviewed in accordance with the policies