



INCLUSION ALLIANCE POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

Complaints Procedure

Approval date- May 2025

Approved by- Board of Directors

Review date	Comments	Reviewed by
May 2027		

Inclusion Alliance

Complaints, Comments and Suggestions Procedure

1. Introduction

1. Inclusion Alliance is committed to providing high quality services to people who we support, and to treating everyone whom we come in contact with well, and fairly, at all times.
- 1.2 If you feel that that has not happened, you have the right to make a complaint. We welcome complaints, suggestions and comments as they offer us a chance to improve our services. Your complaint or suggestion may well improve things for everyone. And if we're doing something right, it's good to know!

2. How to make a comment or suggestion

- 2.1 If you want to make a comment or give us a suggestion about your service you can tell your support worker or the Manager of the service. You can do this in person, by phone, by email or by letter, whichever works best for you.

3. Making complaints

- 3.1 Where there is a complaint, Inclusion Alliance wants to find out what has happened and to put right any mistakes we might have made as quickly as possible.
- 3.2 Inclusion Alliance recognises that making a complaint can be very difficult for some people, and we will always investigate and deal with complaints in a sensitive and appropriate way.
- 3.3 You can make a complaint without putting your name on it but please remember if you do, we won't be able to give you any feedback, and might not be able to investigate properly as it will be hard for us to get enough information.
- 3.4 You can also use someone to speak on your behalf, if you wish; just let us know who you would like to help you.

- 3.5 If you want to make a complaint, we have included a complaints form, which might make it easier for you to describe your complaint. We would prefer you to use this if possible, because it asks for all the information we would need to properly investigate your complaint. However, we are aware that this might be difficult for some people, and you can tell us about your complaint by phone, email or by letter if that works better for you.
- 3.6 We will take all complaints, suggestions and comments seriously and will always take whatever steps we can to make things better

4. What is a complaint?

- 4.1 A complaint is when someone is not happy about something that has happened, or maybe has not happened, but should have!

5. How to make a Complaint

- 5.1 There are four levels of complaint:
- Informal
 - Formal
 - Appeal
 - Complaint to an organisation outside of Inclusion Alliance

6. What happens with different levels of complaints

6.1 Informal

- You can approach the person whose action you are not happy with, or their Manager if you are not comfortable to talk to the person directly. They may be able to deal with the complaint on the spot. The person you have mentioned it to must make a record of what you have said, and what they did, and whether you are happy with that. Then they must send that record to the Manager.

6.2 Formal complaints

- If you do not feel that your concern has been addressed, you can make a formal complaint.
- You should contact the Manager of Inclusion Alliance and say you want to make a formal complaint. You will need to give a clear explanation about what happened, and it needs to be written down by yourself, or someone who is helping you to make the complaint, such as a friend or someone who can speak on your behalf or it can be recorded. You will also need to give your contact details so that they can follow this up with you. It would also be helpful if you could give some information about what you would like to achieve by

making this complaint - for example what you would like to be better in the future.

- The Manager will come back to you within 48 hours to say that they have received the complaint.
- The Manager will then investigate, ensuring that everyone gets a chance to record their side of what happened.
- The Manager will come back to you with a reply and suggestion about how to resolve the complaint within 2 weeks, unless there is a reason why the complaint cannot be investigated (eg. the person being complained about may be on holiday). If this is the case, the Manager will contact you and tell you a new timescale, and will then get back to you with a reply within the new date given.
- If an Inclusion Alliance staff member is the subject of the complaint, they have the right to ask for support from a staff representative or friend who is not a lawyer.
- The investigation will identify the events and issues leading up to and including the circumstances of the complaint, and will be put together into a written report. This information would be held in a paper copy version and if information had been gathered electronically, we would also save this information.
- The Manager or person investigating the complaint has a right to be treated with respect. If you or anyone else involved in making the complaint behaves in a way that is abusive or unacceptable, then the Manager or person hearing the complaint has a right to stop the meeting or phone call immediately.
- If the complaint is about the Manager of Inclusion Alliance, 2 members of the Board of Management will take the place of the Manager and investigate the complaint as outlined above.
- Formal complaints raised with Inclusion Alliance will be held in internal records and the registered Manager of the service will log the complaint with the Care Inspectorate.

6.3 **Appeal**

- If you are not happy with the response to the complaint, you can appeal in writing, or by phone or in person if that is easier for you, stating the reasons. Your complaint will be dealt with two Board members who are senior to the Manager who previously investigated. They are the 'investigating panel'.

- The Investigating Panel will meet with you and examine the appeal within 10 working days.
- As before, people who get support from Inclusion Alliance may have help from a friend, family member or someone who can speak on your behalf to take the complaint, and any staff member being investigated may have help from a friend or a person who is not a lawyer.
- The Board members who are the investigating the appeal will consider any evidence provided, and any concerns about how the matter has been dealt with, and may call witnesses to provide evidence. If this means it takes longer to investigate, you will be told this and how long it is expected to take.
- The panel will decide whether the response was correct and may make recommendations for further action if necessary. The panel will tell you of their decision in writing within five working days of the meeting and their decision will be final. Inclusion Alliance will not carry out any more investigation into the matter.

6.4 **Complaining outside of Inclusion Alliance**

- If you are unhappy with the final response, there are organisations outside of Inclusion Alliance whom you can ask to investigate further.
- **For people who live in, or whose service is funded by East Lothian:**
East Lothian Council, Social Work Department, Randall House, Macmerry Business Park, Macmerry EH33 1RW. Tel: 01875 824309
- **For people who live in, or whose service is funded by City of Edinburgh Council:**
Edinburgh Social Work Advice and Complaints service, 1.7 Waverley Court, 4 East Market Street, Edinburgh, EH8 8BG Tel: 0131 553 8395,
Email: socialwork.complaints@edinburgh.gov.uk
- **And for anyone:**
Care Inspectorate, Compass House, 11 Riverside Drive
Dundee, DD1 4NY Tel: 01382 207 100,
Email: enquiries@careinspectorate.gov.scot
- If your complaint is about the way a staff member who works in the services has behaved, you can also complain to the Scottish Social Services Council, SSSC. You can find the right part of their system if you go onto the website www.sssc.uk.com/fitness-to-practice-/raising-a-concern.

At the moment they are only accepting serious complaints about staff who have done any of the following things:

- sexual misconduct, including indecent images of children
- violent or threatening behaviour
- serious dishonesty, including theft abusive or neglectful behaviour towards a person using services
- behaviour that is fundamentally incompatible with registration such as serious criminal acts
- health which is not being managed and affects the safety of people who use services*.

6. Complaints form



Complaints Form

Date of complaint:



What is the complaint about:



**Details of person making the complaint
(i.e. name and contact details)**



Please tell us what happened



**Which part of what happened
are you complaining about?**

**Please also mention if you
are complaining about a
specific person**



**How would you like things to
be in the future so that it
works better for you?**



Approved by Board on 27/5/25