

Complaints Policy

A guide to making complaints about us or a member of our staff.

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About us

We are Care Inspectorate Wales (CIW), the independent regulator of social care and childcare. We register, inspect and take action to improve the quality and safety of services for the well-being of the people of Wales.

What is a Complaint?

We can deal with a complaint if it is about dissatisfaction with the standard of service you have received from us, or if you are unhappy about the conduct or actions of a member of our staff or people working for us.

What we can't deal with as part of our complaints process

There are times when the issues you raise with us cannot be dealt with through our complaints process. This is because the issues you raise should be dealt with through another process – some examples include:

- Complaints about Social Services or other agencies.
- Complaints about providers.
- Concerns about safeguarding or the quality of care being provided.
- Challenges to the inspection report.
- Challenges to enforcement action.

When you contact us to make a complaint, we will tell you if the issues you are raising can be addressed by the complaints process or not. If our complaints process cannot look into the issues you have raised, we will advise you about other ways of taking these forward. If we are taking enforcement action against a provider, we may not be able to consider a complaint from them until the legal process has finished.

In some circumstances, it may be more appropriate to resolve the matter through a meeting or telephone conversation with a Team Manager or Senior Manager.

How to make a complaint

If you're not happy with the standard of service you have received or expected to receive from CIW, you can make a complaint by contacting the Quality and Information Team who deal with complaints. You can contact the team in one of the following ways:

Phone: 0300 7900 126

(9:00am – 5:00pm Monday to Thursday, until 4:30pm on Fridays)

Email: ciw.complaints@gov.wales (<mailto:ciw.complaints@gov.wales>)

Website: <https://careinspectorate.wales/contact-us/complaints-about-us>
(<https://www.careinspectorate.wales/contact-us/complaints-about-us>)

If you find it difficult to explain your complaint to us then you can ask someone else (for example a friend or a family member) to make the complaint on your behalf as your advocate.

You are also welcome to bring your advocate with you to support you at any meeting you may have with us at any stage of the complaint investigation process. When we write to you about your complaint, we will also send copies of letters and other documents to your advocate.

If you are making a complaint on behalf of somebody else, we will need their agreement for you to take this action on their behalf. This agreement can be provided to us in writing or over the phone via the contact details provided above.

We will look at your complaint if you tell us about it within six months of the situation leading to the issues you wish to raise. This is because it is better to look into your complaint whilst the issues are still fresh in everyone's mind.

In exceptional circumstances, we may be able to look into a complaint which is brought to our attention later than this. You will have to give us strong reasons why you have not raised this complaint earlier and we will need to have sufficient information about the issue to enable us to consider it fully.

How we will deal with your complaint

When you contact the organisation, we will note the details of your complaint and assess how best to address this. You will receive written acknowledgement of your contact via email or post. The information you provide to us will be handled in line with the UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR) and the Data Protection Act (DPA), and further information is available in our [privacy notice](https://www.careinspectorate.wales/privacy-notice-html) (<https://www.careinspectorate.wales/privacy-notice-html>).

- **We will ensure we capture the details and the nature of your complaint.** If you have contacted us by telephone, we will keep a record of the issues you raise and we will ask you to confirm we have accurately captured what you have said to make sure we have not missed any important details.
- **We will seek to achieve an early resolution to your complaint.** We will appoint a manager who is operationally independent of your case and who will contact you to

discuss and try to resolve your complaint. We aim to resolve your issues within 10 working days of receiving your complaint.

- **If it is not possible to achieve an early resolution to your issues, we will undertake a formal investigation into your complaint.** The investigating officer will agree with you on the issues to be investigated and the scope of their investigation.
- **We will prepare a plan outlining how we will respond to your complaint.** Once the investigating officer has defined your complaint with you, we will send you a copy of the agreed issues to be investigated for your agreement. This will be in the form of a complaint response plan.
- **We will undertake a full investigation into your complaint.** As soon as we have received confirmation of your agreement to the complaint response plan, the investigation into your complaint will begin. We aim to complete our investigation into your complaint and send you a copy of our findings within 20 working days from the date the formal investigation was agreed. Where the timescale cannot be met or if the issues that make up your complaint are particularly complex, it may take us longer to complete our investigation. If this is the case, we will ensure you are kept informed of our progress and will agree with you the time we think it will take to complete our investigation.
- **We will send you the investigation findings report.** A copy of the investigation officer's findings report will be sent to you at the conclusion of the investigation.

If your complaint involves a third party, it may be appropriate for the investigating officer to contact them as part of their investigation. They will explain to you the reasons why they need to include a third party and these reasons will be outlined in the complaint response plan and/or investigation findings report as appropriate.

What you can expect from us

We are committed to dealing with complaints about our service as quickly and as effectively as possible in a way which is fair, open and transparent.

If you make a complaint it won't affect the service you get now or in the future.

Where possible we would prefer to deal with any complaint you have as soon as you feel the service you are receiving is not what you expect. In the first instance, it is a good idea to talk with the relevant member of staff. They may be able to address your complaint by discussing this with you and be able to fully explain to you what is happening.

We can also explain to you what action we can or cannot take to look into the matter further.

What we expect from you

We believe you have the right to be listened to, heard, understood and respected. We believe our staff should also have the same rights. We will be polite and courteous in our dealings with you and therefore expect you to be polite and courteous in your dealings with us. We will not tolerate unreasonable, aggressive or abusive behaviour, unreasonable demands or unreasonable persistence. Care Inspectorate Wales regards any incident of this nature as serious and we will take action in accordance with Welsh Government policy to protect our staff where necessary. For example, where our staff encounter such behaviour, we reserve the right to communicate with you in writing only, either by post or email. We will also consider what further action, if any, the organisation needs to take to manage unreasonable behaviour if/and when this occurs

Public Services Ombudsman for Wales

If you are not satisfied with the way we have dealt with or addressed your complaint, you may contact the Public Services Ombudsman for Wales. The Ombudsman is independent of all Government bodies and can look into your complaint if you believe you or the person on whose behalf you are complaining has:


- Been treated unfairly or received a bad service through some failure on the part of the body providing it.
- Been disadvantaged personally by a service failure or have been treated unfairly.

The Ombudsman expects you to bring your concerns to our attention first and to give us an opportunity to provide a response. You can contact the Ombudsman by:

Phone: 0300 790 0203

Email: ask@ombudsman-wales.org.uk (<mailto:ask@ombudsman-wales.org.uk>)

Website: [ombudsman.wales](https://www.ombudsman.wales/) (<https://www.ombudsman.wales/>) (External link)



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