



Avocet Care & Support Ltd

Complaints

Policy Statement

This Charity believes that if a person wishes to make a complaint or register a concern they should find it easy to do so. It is the Charity's policy to welcome complaints and look upon them as an opportunity to learn, adapt, improve and provide better services. This policy is intended to ensure that complaints are dealt with properly and that all complaints or comments by residents and their representatives and carers are taken seriously.

The Charity believes that failure to listen to or acknowledge complaints will lead to an aggravation of problems, resident dissatisfaction and possible litigation. The Charity supports the principle that most complaints, if dealt with early, openly and honestly, can be sorted at a local level between the complainant and the Charity. If this fails due to the complainant being dissatisfied with the result, the Charity will respect the right of the complainant to take the complaint to the next stage.

The Charity's complaints procedure complies fully with the current legislation and regulations.

Aim of the Policy

The aim of this policy is to ensure that its complaints procedure is properly and effectively implemented and that residents, representatives or friends feel confident that their complaints and worries are listened to and acted upon promptly and fairly.

Goals

The goals of the Charity are to ensure the following.

1. Residents, their representatives and carers are aware of how to complain and that the Charity provides easy to use opportunities for them to register their complaints.
2. Every complaint is acknowledged within 5 working days of receipt.
3. Investigations into complaints are held promptly.
4. Complaints are responded to in writing by the Charity within 10 working days.
5. Complaints are dealt with promptly, fairly and sensitively with due regard to the upset and worry that they can cause to both staff and residents.

The Charity believes that, wherever possible, complaints are best dealt with on a local level between the complainant and the Charity. If either of the parties is not satisfied by a local process, the person will be advised that they can take their complaint to the local authority, if they receive funding support from it, or directly to the Local Government Ombudsman if they are self-funding. Local authority-funded residents may also decide to take their complaint to the Local Government Ombudsman if they are dissatisfied with the way that the Charity or the local authority has handled their complaint. Details of relevant ombudsman are listed below:

The Housing Ombudsman: You can complete an online form at www.housing-ombudsman.org.uk/residents/make-a-complaint

Or email info@housing-ombudsman.org.uk



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Telephone 0300 111 3000

The Care Quality Commission:

The Care Quality Commission states that it will always welcome hearing about any concerns, though it will not investigate any complaint directly:

You can complete the form online at www.cqc.org.uk

Or e-mail to enquiries@cqc.org.uk

Telephone 03000 616 161

By post to: Care Quality Commission, Citygate, Gallowgate, Newcastle-upon-Tyne NE1 4PA.

In the event of the complaint involving alleged abuse or a suspicion that abuse has occurred, the Charity will refer the matter immediately to the Local Safeguarding Board. Usually the board will call a strategy meeting to decide on the actions to be taken next. This could entail an assessment of the allegation by a member of the Safeguarding Authority team.

Definition

A complaint is defined as 'an expression of dissatisfaction, however made, about the standard of service, actions or lack of action by the landlord, its own staff or those action on its behalf affecting a resident or group of residents'

A resident who expresses dissatisfaction with any aspect of the charities services has the right to make a complaint and must always be offered the opportunity to do so. It is the residents decision as to whether they wish their dissatisfaction to be seen as a service request or a complaint. A resident must always be offered the opportunity to make a complaint.

Service Request

A service request is a request from a resident, relative or representative to take action to put something right within the service that they use. The scope of a service request is vast due to the differing nature of our services. Our services cover Sheltered accommodation and Registered Care Homes.

Some examples of service requests are: a request for a repair to be completed or support to access a service outside of the sheltered housing service or registered care home, an issue with the food supplied or problems with a visiting contractor. A service request must always be logged in the Service requests & complaints folder held at each property and actions taken to meet the request detailed in the outcomes section of the document.

Complaint

A complaint is defined as an expression of dissatisfaction, however it is made whether verbally or in writing about the standard of service, action or lack of action taken by the charity its staff or those acting on the charities behalf



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Stages of Compliant

Complaints made to the charity have a 2 stage process. Once we have confirmed with the resident or relative that they wish to make a complaint we will follow these steps:

(1): Stage 1

- (1a) A complaint is received either verbally or in writing it should be handed to the Complaints Management Team member (Operations Manager)
- (1b) The complaints team will confirm in writing within 5 working days that the complaint has been received and is being investigated. The date the complaint is received is day 0 of the process.
- (1c) Complaints team investigate the complaint and respond in writing to the resident/relative within 10 working days. Our stage 1 response will detail timescales within which actions will be completed. We will also update the resident/relative regularly on outstanding actions until such time as all actions are remedied.
- **(1d) If the resident/representative is not happy with the response to the stage 1 complaint it will be escalated to stage 2.**

(2): Stage 2

- (2a) The resident/representative should write to the CEO to inform them you wish to escalate your complaint to stage 2:
Michelle Rogers
Avocet Care & Support Ltd
West Suite, Cottis House
South Street
Rochford
Essex, SS4 1BB
Email: m.rogers@avocetsupport.com
- (2b) CEO will respond to your escalation letter within 5 working days
- (2c) CEO will review all documentation regarding the complaint and respond.
- (2d) A response will be provided to the resident/ representative within 20 working days of the original acknowledgement letter being sent by the CEO. This letter will detail any further actions taken to remedy the issue.



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(3): If you are not happy with the outcome of your stage 2 complaint

Your complaint can be escalated if you remain unhappy with the resolution. Depending on the nature of the original complaint you can contact:

Chairman of the Board of Trustees – Property or Care related complaints

The Housing Ombudsman – Property/building related complaints

Care Quality Commission or Local Authority Access Team – Care related complaints

(4) When we will not accept a complaint

It is very rare that a complaint will not be accepted. Examples of when we may not accept a complaint are:

- When a complaint has been brought to our attention 12 months after the date of the issue/incident, except in the instance of a safeguarding concern which would always be investigated.
- When a complaint is the same matter which is or has been subject to legal proceedings

However, we do not take a blanket approach to excluding complaints and each will be considered on their own individual circumstances

(5) Option to Nominate a Representative

If you wish to nominate an individual to deal with your complaint on your behalf you are welcome to do so. We will require authorisation from you in writing with your nominated individuals details. If your nominated individual holds power of attorney for your Health & Welfare we will also accept a copy of this as authorisation for us to speak to them on your behalf

Related Policies

Rights Policy

Resident Feedback Policy

This policy is available on our website www.avocetcaresupport.com, in paper format within our homes and within the new resident guide.

This will be reviewed as a minimum annually