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What is Escalation process

Situations arise when workers in one agency feel that the decision made by a worker from another agency regarding safeguarding an adult at risk is not a safe decision. All workers should feel able to challenge decision-making and to see this as their right and responsibility to promote the best multi-agency safeguarding practice. Disagreements should be resolved as speedily as possible and at the earliest possible stage in the process. At all stages, the safety of the adult at risk, and the person's desired outcomes should be the primary considerations.

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Stage 1: Professionals involved.

Initial attempts should be taken to resolve the disagreement between the professionals involved. Differences in status and/or experience may affect the confidence of some workers to pursue this unsupported. It may be useful for individuals to debrief with their line manager following some disputes to promote continuing good working relationships.

If the process needs to progress to a higher stage, it is important that the professionals involved are included in discussions at each stage of the process.

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Stage 2: Line Managers

The line manager should raise the concerns and attempt to resolve the disagreement with the equivalent supervisor / manager in the other agency. The line manager should also confirm that steps have been taken to ensure the safety of the adult whilst discussions take place.

The line manager involved should notify the safeguarding lead within their organisation of the dispute and of the outcome.

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Stage 3: Organisational Safeguarding leads.

Safeguarding leads should confirm that actions are in place to ensure the adult's safety during discussions. A multiagency safeguarding or best interest meeting may help review risks and ensure an interim protection plan is in place.

Safeguarding leads in the involved organisations should notify the safeguarding lead within their commissioning body of the dispute.

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Stage 4: Safeguarding Board Representatives

The matter should be referred to the agencies' nominated Luton Safeguarding Adults Board representative. They should agree a resolution with their colleagues at Board level. Board representatives must be mindful of the need to resolve disagreements as speedily as possible, ensuring that the safety of the adult at risk is the primary consideration.

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Recording and Communicating Decisions

At all stages of the process actions and decisions must be recorded in the case record and shared with relevant professionals, including professionals involved in the original disagreement. There should be written confirmation between the parties about the agreed outcome and how any outstanding issues will be pursued.

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Additional information

For more information check on Escalation of professional disputes:
<https://trixcms.trixonline.co.uk/api/assets/panbedfordshiresabs/975eb98a-dda8-47c8-951e-e368b0377889/lsab-escalation-of-professional-disputes.pdf>

LSAB Escalation Template:
<https://trixcms.trixonline.co.uk/api/assets/panbedfordshiresabs/cf966c98-877b-4ebc-8bd4-90e859770087/lsab-escalation-template.docx>

Escalating Professional Disputes