



Cyngor Bwrdeistref Sirol  
**MERTHYR TUDFUL**  
**MERTHYR TYDFIL**  
County Borough Council

# Social Services Complaints Policy

Version 2.0  
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## **Complaints How To Be Heard**

Any member of the public, including a child, who has received, or was entitled to receive a service from Social Services, may make a complaint. You may make a complaint on behalf of someone else, where that person:

- Is a child.
- Has requested you to act on their behalf.
- Lacks capacity or has died.

We aim for high standards but sometimes things do go wrong. Unless you tell us, we will not know that you are unhappy.

This factsheet explains how, with your help and that of the staff working with you, we can sort out your complaint. Guidance from the Welsh Government tells us how we must sort out complaints.

### **What is a complaint?**

#### **A complaint is:**

- An expression of dissatisfaction or concern
- Either written or spoken or made by any other communication method
- Made by one or more members of the public
- About a public service provider's actions or lack of action; or
- About the standard of service provided

#### **A complaint is not:**

- An initial request for a service
- A formal review or appeal against a decision or determination
- A means to seek change to legislation or a 'properly made' policy decision
- A means for lobbying groups / organisations to seek to promote a cause

## Looking after your personal information

If you make a complaint, we will respect your right to confidentiality. Although we will need to share the information you give us with others who might be dealing with your complaint, we will only do this if necessary. We will not pass on any information unless we have to do so by law, and will only pass on as much as is necessary.

## To contact our Complaints Office

### Complaints Officer

Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council, Civic Centre, Castle Street, Merthyr Tydfil, CF47 8AN.

Telephone: 01685 725000

Email: [mtcbcomplaints@merthyr.gov.uk](mailto:mtcbcomplaints@merthyr.gov.uk)

## The Complaint process

A complaint should usually be made within 12 months of becoming aware of the problem. A complaint can be made in writing (letter or email) or orally (by phone or in-person).

There are **two stages** to the process.

### Stage 1 – Local Resolution

We will acknowledge receipt of your complaint within 2 working days.

In an attempt to resolve matters, we will offer to discuss your complaint with you (either face to face or by telephone). We will endeavour to do this within 10 working days of the date of acknowledgement. We will endeavour to write to you within 15 working days.

If you are not satisfied with our response, you can ask for it to progress to Stage 2.

### Stage 2- Formal Investigation

We will compile a formal written record of your complaint and the outcome that you would like to achieve within 5 working days.

The investigation will not start until we both agree on what is to be investigated.

The complaint will be investigated by an Independent Investigator (not an employee of Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council). An Independent Person will also be appointed for representations from Children Services.

The Independent Investigator will investigate the complaint:

- by undertaking a fact finding exercise
- interviewing those concerned
- preparing a report for the Local Authority.

The Local Authority will consider the investigation report and the action to be taken as a consequence. The Director of Social Services will then write to you.

We aim to respond to your complaint within 25 working days (from the start date). If this is not possible we will inform you. In any event, a response will be provided within 6 months.

Whilst it is recommended that you try to resolve your complaint informally at first, you have the right to ask for a complaint to be considered at this stage from the outset.

What can I do if I'm still not happy?

If you are dissatisfied with this response, you can ask the Public Services Ombudsman for Wales to look at your complaint.

### **Public Service Ombudsman for Wales**

**1 Ffordd yr Hen Gae, Pencoed, Bridgend, CF35 5LJ**

**Telephone: 0300 790 0203 (calls charged at local rate)**

**Email: [ask@ombudsman-wales.org.uk](mailto:ask@ombudsman-wales.org.uk)**

### **Can I ask someone to help me with my complaint?**

You have the right to an advocate (someone who will help you state your point of view). If you are under 18 we will usually find you an advocate. If you are over 18 we will endeavour to signpost you where to find one.

### **Advocacy for Children and Young People**

**TGP Cymru**

**The Factory, Welsh Hills Works, Jenkin Street, Porth, RCT, CF39 9PP**

**Telephone: 01443 805940**

**Freephone: 0800 4703930**

**Email: [cwmtafmorgannwg@tgpcymru.org.uk](mailto:cwmtafmorgannwg@tgpcymru.org.uk)**

## **Advocacy for Adults**

**LLAIS, Cwm Taf Morgannwg**

**Llais are trained, dedicated complaints advocacy staff will provide you with the free, independent, and confidential support you are entitled to.**

**Ty Antur, Parc Navigation, Abercynon, CF45 4SN  
Telephone: 01443 403590**

**E-mail: [cwmtafmorgannwgadvocacy@llaiscymru.org](mailto:cwmtafmorgannwgadvocacy@llaiscymru.org)**

### **What if I'm not sure who to complain to?**

You may have a complaint about a service we have arranged for you with another care provider, such as a residential care home, a home care agency, or a day service. Each organisation will have its own complaints process and we will usually send your complaint to them and make sure they deal with it. We will tell you exactly what we are doing.

If your complaint is about something we have provided jointly with another organisation, e.g. a package of care from both health and social care staff, we will usually look at your complaint together and usually send you one response.

### **Could I complain to anyone else?**

**The Care Inspectorate Wales (CIW) regulates all care services in Wales. You can complain directly to them about social care received from care homes and home care agencies, as well as services run by the Council.**

**Care Inspectorate Wales (CIW), South East Wales Regional Office**

**Welsh Government, Rhydyar Business Park, Merthyr Tydfil CF48 1UZ**

**Telephone: 03007 900 126    <https://careinspectorate.wales>**

**Email: [ciw@gov.wales](mailto:ciw@gov.wales)**

**The Social Care Wales regulates professional social care workers and has the power to look into allegations of misconduct.**

**Social Care Wales**

**Southgate House, Wood Street, Cardiff CF10 1EW**

**Telephone: 0300 303 3444, [www.socialcare.wales](http://www.socialcare.wales)**

**Email: [info@socialcare.wales](mailto:info@socialcare.wales)**

**The Children's Commissioner for Wales can support and advise children and young people on their rights.**

**Children's Commissioner for Wales  
Llewellyn House, Harbourside Business Park, Harbourside Road, Port Talbot, SA13 1SB**

**Telephone: 01792 765600, Email: [post@childcomwales.org.uk](mailto:post@childcomwales.org.uk)**

**[www.childcomwales.org.uk](http://www.childcomwales.org.uk)**

### **Can I get advice or help?**

The following organisations may be able to help you make a complaint. .

#### **General Advice**

##### **Merthyr Tydfil Citizens Advice Bureau**

**Post Office Lane, Merthyr Tydfil, CF47 8BE**

**Telephone: 01685 382188**

##### **Older People**

##### **Age Cymru**

**Ground Floor, Mariners House, Trident Court, East Moors Road, Cardiff, CF24 5TD**

**Telephone: 0300 303 44 98**

*This leaflet can be made available in other formats upon request.*

*For more information, please contact the Complaints Office*

*[MTCBCcomplaints@merthyr.gov.uk](mailto:MTCBCcomplaints@merthyr.gov.uk)*

*Telephone: 01685 725000*