

# Complaints & Representations Policy

Revised 2026

## **1. Relevant Legislation & Statutory Guidance**

### **Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998**

This is a law that protects whistle-blowers from negative treatment or unfair dismissal. It is part of the Employment Rights Act 1996. It makes it unlawful to subject a worker to negative treatment or to dismiss them because they have raised a whistleblowing concern. The law enables workers in the public and private sectors who 'blow the whistle' to complain to an employment tribunal, if they are dismissed or suffer any other form of detriment, for doing so.

### **Human Rights Act 1998**

This is a law that sets out the fundamental rights and freedoms that everyone in the UK is entitled to. It incorporates the rights set out in the European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR) into domestic British law. The Act came into force in the UK in October 2000.

### **European Convention of Human Rights**

This is an international convention to protect human rights and political freedoms in Europe.

### **The Supported Accommodation (England) Regulations 2023**

These regulations include the Quality Standards (leadership and management, protection, accommodation & support) which set out the outcomes that supported accommodation providers are expected to achieve. They also include the underpinning requirements that providers must meet in order to achieve the Quality Standards for supported accommodation for young people aged 16 or 17.

### **Regulation 31 - The Supported Accommodation (England) Regulations 2023**

This regulation states that the Registered Person must establish a procedure for considering complaints and representations made by or on behalf of children.

### **Department for Education - Guide to the Supported Accommodation Regulations (including Quality Standards): March 2023**

This guide accompanies the Supported Accommodation (England) Regulations 2023. It provides further explanation and information for everyone providing supported accommodation, for looked after children and care leavers aged 16 and 17, for whom the Local Authority has a duty to accommodate or arrange accommodation.

[The Supported Accommodation \(England\) Regulations 2023 - legislation.gov.uk](https://www.legislation.gov.uk)

[Guide to the Supported Accommodation Regulations \(including Quality Standards\): March 2023 - Department for Education](#)

## **2. Introduction & Purpose**

Locate Accommodation Ltd wishes to maintain the highly regarded level of service it provides to young people placed in our supported accommodation, and if/when necessary, also make improvements. Furthermore, we recognise that an effective complaints procedure will ensure that young people's voices are heard.

Locate Accommodation Ltd is committed to ensuring that complaints and representations made by (or on behalf of young people) are taken seriously, fully investigated, resolved quickly, sympathetically, confidentially and reflectively.

This policy aims to inform young people, Placing Authorities or any other relevant individual of their right to make a complaint and explain the process that will follow. It also aims to ensure that all employees are aware of their responsibilities in relation to Locate Accommodation Ltd's complaints procedure.

This policy applies to all young people placed in our supported accommodation, Placing Authorities, any other relevant individual, employees and to the management team that oversee the running of the organisation.

If a young person is blind, has impaired vision, or another impairment/disability or requirement, Locate Accommodation Ltd will, so far as it is practicable to do so, supply a copy of this document in a suitable and alternative format.

## **3. Suggestions**

Locate Accommodation Ltd encourages suggestions on any matter/s relating to a young person's Pathway Plan, their treatment within the supported accommodation and/or the operation of the company etc. We consider such feedback as a means of dealing with any dissatisfaction before it, eventually, turns into a complaint.

Suggestions can be made verbally; however, there is also a 'Suggestion Form' that has been designed for this purpose and its use is encouraged.

## **4. How to Make a Complaint**

It is hoped that a young person's time with Locate Accommodation Ltd will be both a positive and helpful experience. If a young person, Placing Authority and/or any other relevant individual is not happy with the level of service provided, or a particular employee, they have the right to complain.

Complainants can bring their concerns to any Locate Accommodation Ltd employee that they are comfortable talking to. They will need to explain that they wish to make a complaint.

The employee will write down the details of the complaint; therefore, the complainant will need to give as much information as they can.

If preferred the complainant can provide a written complaint or seek assistance from another individual. A Complaints Form can be provided on request.

Once the employee has all of the necessary details, this information will be shared with the Designated Complaints Manager, who will thoroughly investigate the matter and decide on a course of action.

The employee will then relay the outcome to the complainant within 28 days of it being brought to the employee's attention.

If the complainant is satisfied with the outcome, they will be given a written report of their complaint and the details of the investigation.

If the complainant is dissatisfied with the outcome, they can appeal and a further meeting will be arranged within 7 days. The complainant, the Designated Complaints Manager and the employee will attend (if necessary). The complainant may also bring someone for support if they wish (such as a friend for example).

The matter will be discussed and explored again. The complainant will be required to explain why they are dissatisfied with the outcome and what they would like it to be. Witnesses may also be asked to give their opinion.

Another appointment will then be arranged, within 28 days, and the complainant will be given Locate Accommodation Ltd's final decision on the matter. This will also be confirmed in writing.

If a young person placed in our supported accommodation is still dissatisfied with the outcome, they must appeal via their Social Worker, and another meeting will then be arranged. The young person, their Social Worker, the Designated Complaints Manager and the employee will attend (if necessary).

The matter will be discussed and explored by the Designated Complaints Manager one last time. The young person will be required to explain why they are still dissatisfied with the outcome, and what they would like it to be. The young person's Social Worker will also be asked to give their opinion. Additionally, decide if they feel further action is necessary, and if so, how they feel the matter should be resolved.

Any complaint made which relates to the safety and/or wellbeing of a young person must be referred to the Responsible Safeguarding Manager immediately, and the applicable procedure will then be prioritised.

#### **5. Locate Accommodation Ltd's Commitment to Complainants**

Locate Accommodation Ltd will assure all young people, that any complaint made, will not prejudice the care and/or level of service that they receive.

Complaints will be addressed fairly and justly; therefore, no person will suffer any form of harassment or reprisal for making a complaint. Additionally, no person who is the subject of a complaint or representation, will take any part in its consideration or investigation, except at the informal resolution stage if the Registered Person considers it appropriate

#### **6. External Complaints**

If a complaint is made by an external individual (such as a Social Worker from a Placing Authority for example), it must be referred to the Designated Complaints Manager immediately, who will then contact the complainant to establish the nature and seriousness of the complaint. Where necessary, Locate Accommodation Ltd's complaints procedure will then commence as usual.

## **7. 'Designated Person'**

Locate Accommodation Ltd recognises that there may be instances whereby a complainant is not satisfied with the response they have received. In such a circumstance, the complainant may seek resolution via a 'Designated Person'.

A 'Designated Person' can be any one of the following:

- a Local Councillor;
- a Member of Parliament (MP) for any constituency; or
- a Designated Local Authority personnel.

Locate Accommodation Ltd appreciates that the role of a 'Designated Person' is to offer an independent view, on whether Locate Accommodation Ltd has acted reasonably, during the handling of a complaint via its applicable procedure.

The 'Designated Person' may make recommendations to Locate Accommodation Ltd or offer to mediate between the two parties.

Locate Accommodation Ltd will provide a report of all action taken, and any other correspondence relating to its complaint's procedure, to the 'Designated Person'.

If a complainant indicates that they would like to engage the services of a Designated Local Authority personnel, Locate Accommodation Ltd will assist the complainant to contact such an individual and also facilitate a meeting between the two parties. This will usually occur within 10 working days of the request being submitted.

## **8. Legal Intervention**

This policy is designed to ensure that all complaints, regarding the level service provided by Locate Accommodation Ltd, are dealt with internally (as far as possible) and to the satisfaction of complainants or their representative.

However, if it is apparent that a complainant has referred the matter to a Solicitor, Locate Accommodation Ltd's complaints procedure may be compromised. If such a situation arises, either at the outset of or during the complaint's procedure, the complainant will be informed that the complaints procedure is no longer in operation. The matter will then be referred to Solicitors and/or Insurers that represent the interests of Locate Accommodation Ltd immediately.

If an employee is not sure how to report the aforementioned matter or requires advice from an external source. There are agencies that specifically provide free, impartial advice on workplace rights, rules and best practice - including the Advisory, Conciliation & Arbitration Service (ACAS). ACAS's helpline number is 0300 123 1100 and it is open Monday – Friday from 8am-6pm.

## **9. Disciplinary Action**

Locate Accommodation Ltd has a number of human resources (HR) related policies in place. Therefore, if employee misconduct becomes apparent during any investigation into a complaint, appropriate action will be taken against the employee in line with the Disciplinary & Grievance Policy. The complainant will be appropriately informed of such action too.

### **10. Extenuating Circumstances**

There may be extenuating circumstances that lead to a delay in Locate Accommodation Ltd resolving a complaint, and at times, the aforementioned timescales not being achieved. This may be due to a variety of reasons (such as a key person being absent from work due to sickness or annual leave, an appeal request, an ongoing and corresponding third-party investigation - including a Placing Authority and/or the Police &/or escalation to a regulatory body etc).

In the event of such a circumstance, the Designated Complaints Manager will update the complainant accordingly, apologise for any inconvenience caused and comply with any associated statutory expectations too.

### **11. Quality Assurance**

the Designated Complaints Manager will ensure that a record is made of any complaint or representation, the action taken in response, and the outcome of any investigation.

the Designated Complaints Manager will also provide to the Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services & Skills (CIECSS) upon request, a statement containing a summary of any complaints or representations made during the 12 months' preceding the date of the request, and the action that was taken in response to each complaint or representation too.

### **12. Applicable Learning &/or Development Opportunities for Employees**

Locate Accommodation Ltd provides training to employees on its complaints procedure and will ensure that this training is revisited periodically. Furthermore, that knowledge is tested within day-to-day discussions, team meetings and supervision.

All of the above practice will ensure Locate Accommodation Ltd's compliance with the Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998, Human Rights Act 1998 and Supported Accommodation (England) Regulations 2023.

Employees can also access the further national guidance resources, which are specified in '**Section 3**', if they are in doubt about any of the aforementioned matters.

**Implementation Date:** November 2025