

Yorkshire Adoption Agency

Complaints Procedure

In providing our Adoption Services Yorkshire Adoption Agency aims to be highly professional and transparent. We however accept that occasionally you may feel dissatisfied about the service you receive. It is therefore important for us to know about this so that we can improve our services and learn from any mistakes. If you make a complaint the Agency will ensure that you will continue to be treated with courtesy and respect and that you do not experience disadvantage because of the complaint. Service will not be withdrawn whilst the Agency investigates your complaint.

Should you need to make a complaint or express dissatisfaction regarding your involvement with the Agency, please write to the Agency Director at Yorkshire Adoption Agency Ltd, Loversall Court, Clayfields, Tickhill Road, Balby, Doncaster, DN4 8QG. Alternatively you may wish to contact the Agency by email at info@yorkshiredoptionagency.org.uk

WHAT WILL HAPPEN TO YOUR COMPLAINT?

- 1 The Agency will acknowledge receipt of the complaint in writing within 10 working days and advise you of the action proposed by the Agency to investigate the matter.
- 2 It is usual for the Social Work Team Manager to undertake the initial investigation of your complaint. You will be invited to meet with the Team Manager to fully discuss your concerns within 15 working days of the Agency receiving your complaint. At any stage in the investigation of your complaint you may be accompanied by a supporter.
- 3 In every case the outcome of the initial investigation into your complaint will be forwarded to you in writing. You will be offered the opportunity to discuss the outcome of the investigation with the Team Manager. It is the Agency's aim to satisfactorily resolve any complaint within 28 days. If for any reason this does not appear possible, the Agency will write to you giving reasons for the delay and if possible a timescale with which you can expect to have a full response to your complaint.
- 4 Following the initial investigation, if the complaint cannot be resolved the Agency Director will contact you or arrange an appointment to further discuss your concerns and attempt to resolve your complaint. He/she will have considered all the information regarding your concerns and attempts to resolve the matter before you meet. Should it not be possible to resolve the matter at this level your complaint will be referred to the Management Executive Sub Committee of the Agency. The Executive Sub Committee will either:

- a) Recommend that they are involved in further investigating the complaint or decide no further action is necessary and give you reasons for their decision.
- b) Refer the complaint to the full Council of Management for further action. Where a complaint is referred to the full Council of Management you will be offered an opportunity to present the complaint to a selected group of the Agency's Council of Management. This will only be offered where a complaint cannot be resolved within the Agency through action either by the Social Work Team Manager, Agency Director, or the Executive Sub Committee.

SPECIAL CIRCUMSTANCES

Where your complaint has arisen as a result of services provided within the agreement, which the Agency has with a Local Authority, the Agency will initially discuss your complaint with the relevant Area Team Manager in the relevant Local Authority. It can then be decided which Agency is most appropriate to investigate your complaint and the action which is proposed. You will be informed of this in writing within 15 days of the complaint being received by Yorkshire Adoption Agency.

Where a complaint is received in respect of the Social Work Team Manager the Agency Director will initially investigate the complaint. If the Agency Director is unable to resolve the matter the complaint will be referred to the Executive sub Committee and later to the Council of Management if necessary.

Any complaint regarding the Agency Director will automatically be referred to the Executive sub Committee and later to the Council of Management if necessary.

COMPLAINTS MADE BEFORE AN AGENCY DECISION IS MADE ABOUT YOUR SUITABILITY TO ADOPT

Stage 1

If you need to make a complaint before successfully completing the Pre Assessment Stage 1 of the adoption process the procedure above will apply.

You will have already been made aware if the Agency makes a decision that you should not proceed to the Stage 2 assessment you will receive the reason for this decision in writing. You will also be reminded in writing that in these circumstances you may instigate the Complaints Procedure.

It is important for you if you progress to a Stage 2 assessment not to confuse the Complaints Procedure with the suitability to adopt decision under Adoption Agencies Regulations. During Stage 2 after either a Brief or Full Report is presented to the Agency's Adoption Panel, the Panel will make a recommendation to the Agency about your suitability to adopt. Panel's recommendations and all other relevant information is considered by the Agency Decision Maker prior to a decision being reached regarding your suitability to adopt.

If the Agency Decision Maker feels that you are unsuitable you will be given 40 days following the decision to make representation to the Agency. Alternatively you may choose to have the matter referred to the Independent Review Panel. The Agency will be pleased to provide you with an explanatory leaflet if you wish for your application to be considered by the Independent Review Panel.

Having received representation from you the Agency Decision Maker will refer your case back to the Adoption Panel for further consideration prior to making a final decision regarding your suitability to be an approved adopter. If your case is referred to the Independent Review Panel the Agency Decision Maker will consider this Panel's recommendation before making a final decision regarding your suitability to adopt.

There is no appeals procedure when a final Agency Decision has been made. If you disagree with the final Agency decision this cannot be investigated under the Agency's complaints procedure.

In any circumstances where you feel that the Agency has treated you unfairly you may wish to discuss your concerns with the Ofsted, which is the Regulatory Body for Voluntary Adoption Agencies.

Ofsted can be contacted at : Ofsted
National Business Unit
Royal Exchange Buildings
St Ann's Square
Manchester
M2 7LA

Telephone : 08456 404040

E-Mail: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk

www.ofsted.org.uk

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