

### Context

The Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) has overall responsibility for the management of allegations of abuse by adults, aged 16 and over, who work with or volunteer with children.

“Safeguarding Children is EVERYBODY’s business”  
(Working Together, 2018)

*We all have a duty to refer cases where abuse is known to have occurred or is suspected. No professional has the right or responsibility to withhold information or to respect a child/young person’s wish for confidentiality or...if you know the adult professionally.*



### Mission and Objectives

The role of LADO is set out in [Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018](#) and is governed by the Authorities duties under s.11 of the Children Act 2004. Working Together requires that each local authority appoints a Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) to be involved in the management and oversight of individual cases, providing advice and guidance to employers and voluntary organisations, liaising with the police and other agencies, and monitoring the progress of cases to ensure that they are dealt with as quickly as possible and consistent with a fair and thorough process.

*Working Together 2018* states that the criteria for LADO involvement apply when an individual working or volunteering with children has:

- Behaved in a way that has harmed a child or may have harmed a child
- Possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child
- Behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates he or she would pose a risk of harm to children
- Behaved or may have behaved in a way that indicates they may not be suitable to work with children.

### Composition and Roles



The LADOs are qualified social workers with extensive experience in front line child protection and risk management. The LADO service comprises of two LADOs, one Assistant LADO and one Professional Support Officer.

The LADO Service can be contacted on 0330 222 6450 or [LADO@westsussex.gov.uk](mailto:LADO@westsussex.gov.uk).

The Duty LADO for the day will triage all referrals and record as either a consultation or allegation, compliant with GDPR.

The LADO are committed to responding to all referrals within one working day.

### **Authority and Empowerment**

The LADO will liaise with Childrens Social Care, the Police, employers, regulators, and national governing bodies.

The LADO will chair evaluation meetings to ensure relevant information is shared with partner agencies and to oversee investigations into the allegation. The LADO does not carry out investigations themselves.



The person subject to an allegation should liaise with their employer, regulator or national governing body for any updates into the investigations. To maintain independence, the LADO does not liaise directly with the adult subject to an allegation and is unable to share information directly.

When the investigations are concluded the LADO will consider all the information available and canvas the views of all involved and make an outcome decision:

- **Substantiated** - A substantiated allegation is one which is Supported or established by evidence or proof.
- **Unsubstantiated** - An unsubstantiated allegation is not the same as a false allegation. It simply means that there is insufficient identifiable evidence to prove or disprove the allegation. The term, therefore, does not imply guilt or innocence.
- **Unfounded** – There is no evidence or proper basis which supports the allegation being made. It might also indicate that the person making the allegation misinterpreted the incident or was mistaken about what they saw. Alternatively, they may not have been aware of all the circumstances.
- **False** – There is sufficient evidence to disprove the allegation.
- **Malicious** – There is clear evidence to prove there has been a deliberate act to deceive and the allegation is entirely false.

The employer, regulator or national governing body is responsible for updating the person of concern of the outcome.

If the allegation is substantiated and the person is dismissed or the employer ceases to use the person's services, or the person resigns or otherwise ceases to provide his or her services,

the Local Authority Designated Officer should discuss with the employer whether a referral should be made to the Disclosure and Barring Service for inclusion on the Barred Lists and/or a regulatory body, e.g. the Teaching Agency or General Medical Council.

Consideration will then be given as to whether the individual should be barred from, or have conditions imposed in respect of, working with children.

If a referral is to be made, it should be submitted within one month.

### Resources and Support



As soon as possible after an allegation has been received, the person subject to the allegation or concern should be advised to contact their union or professional association.

Human Resources within the employment agency should be consulted at the earliest opportunity in order that appropriate support can be provided via the organisation's occupational health or employee welfare arrangements.

The person should be clear on who will update them on the progress of the investigation. This is an ongoing process and should be continued throughout any police investigation, Section 47 Enquiry or disciplinary investigation.

See [Pan-Sussex child protection procedures](#) for allegations management.

### Team Operations

The LADO service is operational Monday – Thursday 9:00 -17:00 and Friday 9:00-16:30.

The LADO Service are managed by Head of Service for Reviewing and Conference, within the Safeguarding, Quality and Practice directorate.

### Negotiation and Agreement

The LADO Service are responsible for completing a service plan which is reviewed quarterly.

The LADO Service produce quarter and annual reports for the [West Sussex Safeguarding Children Partnership](#).

The LADO Service is committed to the principles it contains and the roles and responsibilities detailed.