



mental welfare  
commission for scotland

# How to make a complaint

A guide for  
children and  
young people



## **Who are we?**

We are the Mental Welfare Commission for Scotland.

We work to make sure that the rights of children and young people are being upheld.

These are protected by the Mental Health Act and the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC).

If you are under 18, or have just turned 18, this information is for you.

This guide explains how we will handle your complaint in a manner that respects and promotes your rights as a child or young person.





## **What can you complain about?**

You have a right to express your views and be heard.

If you are not happy about something we did or didn't do, you can complain about it.

For example:

- We didn't do something we said we would.
- We took too long to help you.
- You didn't like how we treated you.
- You think we made a wrong decision.
- You didn't like how someone working for us behaved.



## Who can complain?

- You can complain directly to us.
- You can ask a responsible adult to complain about matters that affect you.

When an adult complains on your behalf, we will always check that you know about their complaint, and that they have your permission.

You have the right to change your mind about them complaining on your behalf





## How can you complain?

Complaints can be verbal or written.

You can:

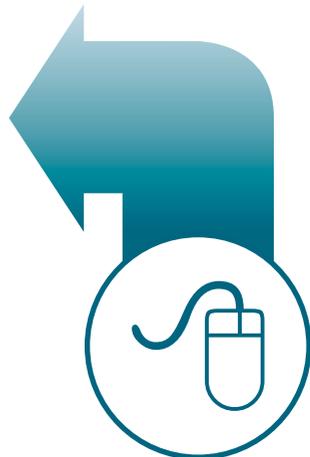
- Talk to us
- Email us
- Call us
- Write to us

You can choose how you want to be contacted.

Our contact information is:  
Mental Welfare  
Commission for Scotland  
Thistle House,  
91 Haymarket Terrace,  
Edinburgh  
EH12 5HE

[mwc.enquiries@nhs.scot](mailto:mwc.enquiries@nhs.scot)

Free phone: 0800 389 6809





## **Support**

We want you to feel safe during the complaint process.

You can choose anyone you know and trust to support you and talk to us.

You can also choose which staff member to talk to about your concerns.

## **First contact with you**

We will contact you to understand your complaint and decide next steps.

We need to know:

- Your name and how to contact you.
- Who will be supporting you.
- What happened.
- What you want us to do.





## **Trust and confidentiality**

Your views will not be shared with anyone without your permission, unless it is necessary to raise a concern for child protection, or adult support and protection, or meet another legal duty.

We will explain this to you if that's the case.

During our investigation, we will keep your identity confidential, as far as possible.



**What happens next?**



### **Stage 1: Quick Response**

- We will try to fix things quickly.
- Where possible, we will respond to you within five working days.
- The process will focus on the best interest for you.

### **Stage 2: Investigation**

If you're unhappy with our response, or if we need more time to investigate, we will:

- Let you know within three working days that we received your complaint and will investigate it.
- Investigate further to find out what went wrong.
- Try to fix it.
- Give you a full response, usually within 20 working days.
- The process will focus on your best interests.





### **Still not happy?**

You can ask the Scottish Public Services Ombudsman (SPSO) to look at your complaint and our response.

The SPSO can be contacted at:

SPSO  
Bridgeside House,  
99 McDonald Road,  
Edinburgh  
EH7 4NS  
FREEPOST SPSO

[www.spsso.org.uk](http://www.spsso.org.uk)

Phone: 0800 377 7330



**Need help to complain?**  
You can get help from:

Scottish Independent  
Advocacy Alliance  
0131 510 9410  
[www.siaa.org.uk](http://www.siaa.org.uk)

Citizens Advice Scotland  
0131 550 1000  
[www.cas.org.uk](http://www.cas.org.uk)

For more information  
about how we will deal  
with your complaint,  
please see the SPSO's  
online guide:

[Child Friendly  
Complaints-handling  
Principles](#)

