

TÚSLA

An Ghníomhaireacht um
Leanaí agus an Teaghlach
Child and Family Agency



Tusla's guide to making a complaint or giving feedback v.2. (2021)





Introduction

Tusla - Child and Family Agency was established on 1st January 2014 and is now the dedicated State agency responsible for improving wellbeing and outcomes for children.

‘Tell Us’ is Tusla’s feedback and complaints policy. Tusla is committed to engaging with children, families and communities regarding the design, delivery and quality of services. Tusla therefore welcomes all comments, compliments and complaints from service users, carers, visitors and the community about the services Tusla provides. Tusla views any comment, compliment or complaint as an opportunity to improve the quality of Tusla services and to learn lessons from any mistakes made. Tusla wants to hear from you when things are not working well, and also when things are working well.

The full complaint and feedback policy version 2. is available at www.tusla.ie.

How to make a Complaint, Comment or pay a Compliment

	Talk to any member of staff
	Email: tellus@tusla.ie When we receive complaints at this email, we will give you a reference number and send your complaint to the relevant service manager.
	Send a letter to any Tusla location You can find a list of our locations on our website at www.tusla.ie
	Phone your local Tusla office (9am to 5pm Monday-Friday) See details on the Tusla website https://www.tusla.ie/get-in-touch/ Or call 01 7718500, and ask for a call back from a member of the Service Experience and Feedback Team.

What happens when you make a complaint, comment or compliment?

Comments and compliments are treated as feedback.

We will acknowledge compliments, comments and suggestions and forward them on to the relevant service.

The local service can then respond as appropriate. We also record them on our National Incident Management System (NIMS) so we have a central record of feedback received.

Complaints are managed under a three stage process.

STAGE 1: Local resolution

When someone complains to us, the most appropriate staff will try to resolve it. Our staff will try to resolve issues **within five working days** at a local level. This might mean your complaint is resolved or that you have agreed a plan on how it will be resolved.

STAGE 2: Referral to a Complaint Officer

If it is impossible to resolve the complaint locally, it can be referred to a Complaint Officer. A Complaint Officer can try to informally resolve the problem if this is helpful, otherwise the need for a complaint investigation will be considered. All complaints made at stage 2 must be in writing or documented to the satisfaction of the Complaint Officer. Assistance with putting a complaint in writing can be sought from any staff member or a member of our Service Experience and Feedback team.

The Complaint Officer will consider the complaint to see if it can be addressed under our policy. If it cannot, you will be advised why, and how best to address the issue you are raising, in a letter from the Complaint Officer. If the matter can be dealt with under the policy, the Complaint Officer will conduct an investigation and provide you with a complaint investigation report at the end of this investigation.

Based on the findings of the investigation, the Complaint Officer can decide to; uphold your complaint, partially uphold your complaint or not uphold your complaint. The report will also make recommendations about what should happen next based on whether your complaint was upheld, partially upheld or not upheld.

STAGE 3: Referral to a Complaint Review Officer

If you are unhappy with the recommendations made in the complaint investigation report, you have a right to seek a review of the recommendations made. Requests for review of a recommendation made in a complaint investigation report must be made within 30 working days of the complaint investigation report being issued to you.

The Complaint Review Officer will then consider the request to see if there are grounds for a review. A helpful list of grounds for a review can be found in Tusla's complaint and feedback policy V2. If there are no grounds for

review found, you will be advised of this by a letter from the Complaint Review Officer explaining why. If there are grounds for a review, the Complaint Review Officer will conduct a review of the recommendations made and provide you with a complaint investigation review report.

Based on the findings of this review, the Complaint Review Officer can decide to uphold the original recommendation(s), alter the original recommendation or make new recommendations. This then concludes the three stage complaints process.

What can I make a Complaint about?

You can make a complaint about any action or lack of action by Tusla (or a service provided on behalf of Tusla) that you consider being unfair and that negatively affects you or has negatively affected you in the past.

This could mean an action that you believe was:

- Taken without proper permission or authority;
- Taken for unnecessary reasons;
- The result of carelessness or negligence;
- Based on wrong or incomplete information;
- Discriminatory;
- Based on bad administrative practice.

Is there a Time Limit for making a Complaint?

Yes, you must make a complaint within 12 months of the date of the incident or action concerned, or within 12 months of becoming aware of the incident or action. A complaints officer may extend the time limit for making a complaint in special circumstances. These could include where you are or had been unwell or bereaved, or where new information becomes available to you over time.

Who can make a Complaint?

The following people can make a complaint:

- People who have received or are receiving Tusla services;
- People who have sought or are seeking Tusla services;
- Close relatives or carers of the above people,
- Those who have the prescribed authority to act on such a person's behalf, or have the legal authority to do so;
- Parents or carers of children who are being/have been provided with services by Tusla or a service provided on behalf of Tusla;

- Close relatives or carers of a deceased person who was in receipt of Tusla services

In addition, Tusla will accept complaints from people, other than those above, who claim to be or to have been adversely affected by action(s) or lack of action by the Agency.

Can I make an anonymous complaint?

In general, we cannot investigate anonymous complaints against a named member of staff. However, we will pass anonymous complaints on to the relevant manager who will consider if a risk assessment is required.

Can a Child or Young person make a Complaint?

Yes, children may make a complaint about the service they have received or are receiving from Tusla or provided on behalf of Tusla. Children's complaints will always be taken seriously and be answered appropriately.

What about Privacy and Confidentiality?

Tusla will treat all personal information and data you provide as confidential and store it securely. This information will be used and retained by Tusla for the purpose of dealing with your complaint. Staff members who are subject to a complaint have the right to see the complaint made against them and provide a reply.

More information on your data protection and privacy rights are available on Tusla's website www.tusla.ie

What about Complaints in relation to Organisations or Bodies providing Services on Behalf of Tusla?

Voluntary organisations or bodies providing services on behalf of Tusla are referred to as service providers. If you have a complaint about a service being provided by a service provider, it is advised that you contact the service provider directly. Service providers must have policies and procedures for managing complaints that are in line with Tusla's complaint policy and procedures. If you are not happy with the response to your complaint by the service provider, you have a right to request a review of the complaint investigation by Tusla.

Do I have any other rights?

Yes. If you are unhappy with the way your complaint is being managed, you have the right to complain to the Office of the Ombudsman or the Office of the Ombudsman for Children as appropriate. You can do this at any time during your engagement with the complaints process.

Ombudsman for Children's Office	
Address Ombudsman for Children's Office Millennium House 52-56 Great Strand Street Dublin 1 D01 F5P8 Ireland	Website www.oco.ie Email ococomplaint@oco.ie Freephone 1800 20 20 40
Office of the Ombudsman	
Address 6 Earlsfort Terrace Dublin 2 D02 W773	Phone 01 639 5600 Complaints email complaints@ombudsman.ie Website https://www.ombudsman.ie

Is there a form I can use to make a complaint?

Yes, the most updated version is available on our website www.tusla.ie