

St.Helens Multi-Agency
Safeguarding Escalation Policy and Dispute Resolution Procedures
Edition 4– April 24

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Multi Agency Safeguarding Escalation Process

Introduction:

This document is intended to provide guidance, support and a process for escalation to a worker from an agency who may not believe that a decision has been made in relation to an Adult with care and support needs that they feel is;

- Not safe
- Not in the Adult's Best Interest (for those who lack capacity)

Effective working together relies on honest and open relationships between agencies. Problem solving is an integral part of co-operation and joint working to Safeguard Adults in need of care and support.

Professional curiosity and challenge should be seen as an opportunity to review decisions and the reason why they are made. If a professional does not feel the decision has been made is right due to concerns regarding the 'Adult's' safety and wellbeing, they have a responsibility to voice this and should feel confident to challenge the decision. Professionals must also respect that an Adult who has the mental capacity to make their own decisions have a right to make 'unwise decisions'.

It is anticipated that cases should only need to be escalated in exceptional circumstances, Safeguarding Enquiries that progress to full investigations will have Strategy Meetings. These meetings should ensure that all professionals involved in that investigation have the opportunity to be involved in the decision-making process. Any concerns in relation to the safeguarding decisions made should be addressed at the Strategy Meeting and a resolution found.

Stage 1 of the Escalation Process

It is anticipated that all initial attempts should be made to resolve the problem during initial discussions and/or strategy meetings if there is any reason the issues have not been resolved it can be escalated.

All initial attempts to resolve issues should normally be between those people who disagree. It should be recognised however that differences in status and/or experience may affect the confidence of some practitioners to pursue this unsupported. In these cases, practitioners should consult with their line manager/lead as appropriate.

A number of Safeguarding Alerts are closed at minimal enquiry – if a professional referrer is concerned that the enquiry is closed at this stage – they have a responsibility to discuss this with the Safeguarding Co-ordinator involved.

If the Safeguarding Alert has progressed to a full investigation and a professional is not satisfied that the decision is 'safe' or is not in a person's best interest, then they need to

discuss this with the Safeguarding Co-ordinator. The Co-ordinator will further discuss this with the Safeguarding Manager to see how the issue can be resolved.

All dispute discussions and decisions must be documented in the case notes.

It may be necessary for the appropriate professionals to have a face to face meeting to discuss the concerns and possible resolution, if this meeting is to progress an Escalation Notice will be required from the Agency raising the issues.

If the decision is not in relation to the outcome of a safeguarding enquiry, this document can be also be used, however the escalation will include a discussion with the relevant Team Manager in the first instance. If the issue is not resolved, further escalation would be to the appropriate Head of Service. If following this stage, further escalation is required a notification should be sent to the Assistant Director for Adult Social Care.

Stage 2 of the Escalation Process

If following stage 1 the remains unresolved, the practitioner should escalate this to their organisations Safeguarding Lead or Line Manager – who will discuss this with the adult safeguarding Head of Service. The Team Manager/Lead and the Head of Service may require a meeting with the practitioners involved to explore possible resolution.

The person disputing the decision must complete the Escalation Notice and forward it to safeguardingadults@sthelens.gov.uk. This document will be reviewed by the Head of Safeguarding, it will be presented during the meeting and opportunities for resolution explored. During this meeting the Escalation outcome document will need to be completed with the agreed outcomes. It is anticipated that all professional disputes should be resolved at this stage – if however, in the unlikely event of a conclusion not being agreed, this should be escalated to Stage 3

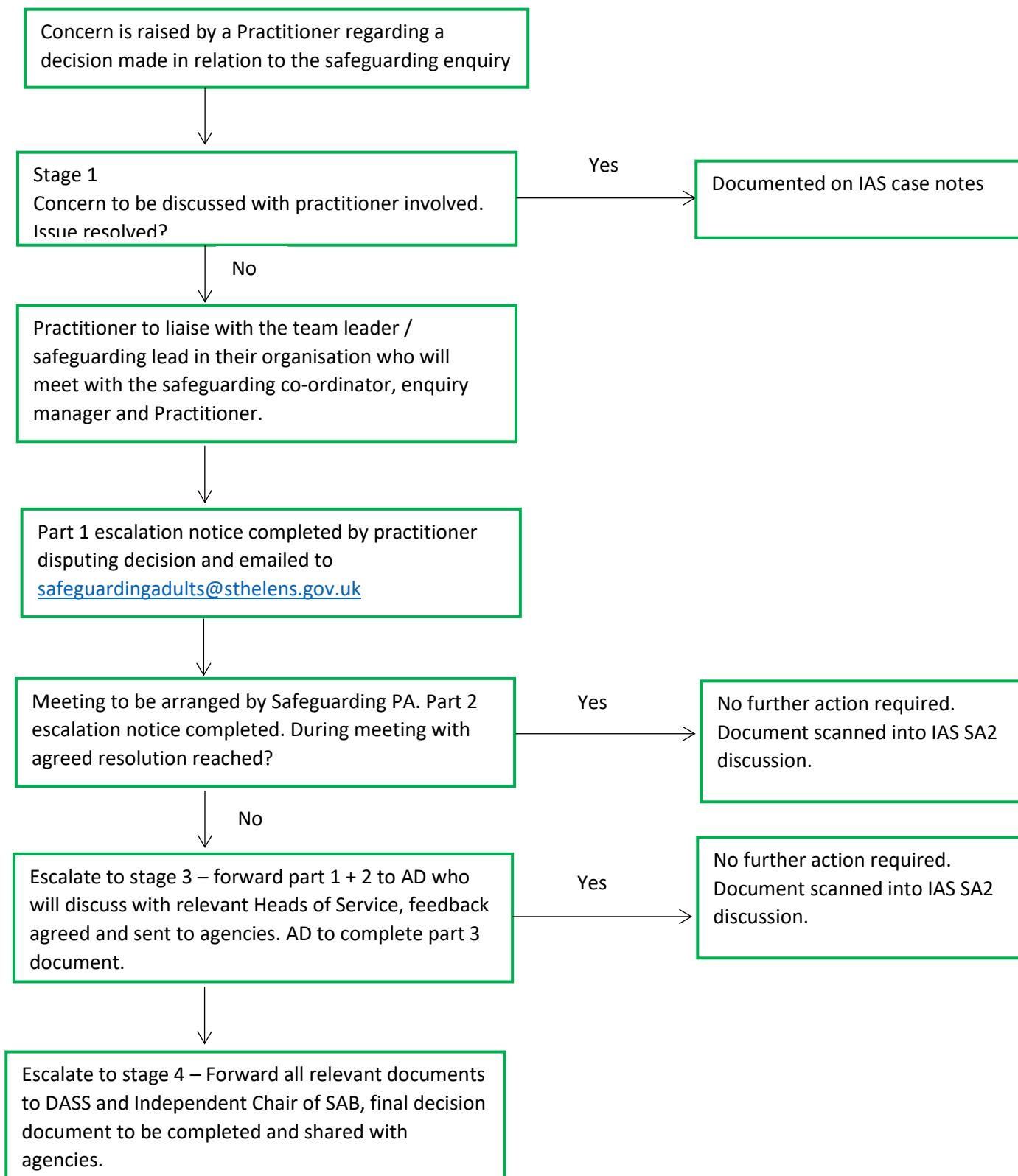
Stage 3 of the Escalation Process

It is anticipated that concerns regarding decisions can be resolved without the need for escalation to this stage, however on the rare occasion that this may arise, the matter will be referred to the Assistant Director of Adult Social Care. The AD will review all discussion notes and Escalation Notice and Escalation Outcome Document and discuss with the appropriate Heads of Service, resolution from this discussion will be documented on AD discussion outcome and sent to agencies involved in the dispute.

Stage 4 of the Escalation Process

It is anticipated that the Stage 4 of the process would only be required in extremely exceptional circumstances. If in the unlikely event an agency is still disputing the outcome of the decision, then a further decision will be required, a discussion between the Director of Adult Social Care (DASS) the Independent Chair of the Safeguarding Adult Board (SAB) is required to make a final decision. All relevant documents to be presented.

Safeguarding Dispute Resolution Process Flowchart



Escalation notice

IAS number:

Name:

Details of safeguarding referral:

Agency issuing escalation notice:

Agency receiving escalation notice:

Reason for dispute:

Please present this to the dispute resolution meeting:

Signed: _____

Date: _____

Signed: _____

Date: _____

Escalation outcome document

To be completed during the dispute resolution meeting

Agreed outcomes/resolution:

Professionals in attendance of the meeting:

Are all issues resolved?

[Yes] [No]

If [No] – what remains an area of concern?

All completed forms to be sent to safeguardingadults@sthelens.gov.uk

Further escalation requires a referral to the AD

<p>AD Discussion outcome <i>Escalation notice and Escalation Outcome documents to be presented</i></p>	
<p>Name of service user: IAS number:</p>	
<p>Date of discussion with AD/Heads of Service:</p>	
<p>Agreed actions/dispute resolution:</p>	
<p>Feedback for agencies:</p>	
<p>Signed: _____ Dated: _____</p>	<p>Signed: _____ Dated: _____</p>
<p>Feedback sent by: _____</p>	

Final Outcome Document

Escalation notice, Escalation Outcome and AD discussion documents to be presented

Name of service user:
IAS number:

Date of discussion with DASS / Independent Chair:

Agreed actions/dispute resolution:

Feedback for agencies:

Signed: _____
Dated: _____

Signed: _____
Dated: _____

Feedback sent by: _____