



Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO)

Guide for members of the public

August 2022



What is a LADO?

The Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) is a statutory role. The role and responsibilities are set out in Working Together 2018 and the process is set out in the South West Child Protection Procedures endorsed by Our Safeguarding Children Partnership (OSCP).

The LADO's primary function is to oversee and co-ordinate any investigation into an incident where an allegation of abuse or harm has been made against a professional or volunteer who has contact with children as part of their work or activities.

The LADO Service sits within Together for Families in Cornwall Council.

When do you contact the LADO?

You may contact the LADO service if you have concerns about a person who works with children, who 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 in a way that indicates he or she may 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

What will the LADO do?

You can speak to a member of the LADO service. You can make a referral to the LADO Service by using the on-line portal.

The LADO Service will:

- oversee and co-ordinate any subsequent multi-agency investigation of an individual case.
- ensure that any immediate risk to children is addressed.
- chair the multi-agency Professional Allegations Oversight Meeting.
- monitor and ensure that a thorough and fair process is undertaken which may include:
 - A criminal investigation
 - A joint police and social care investigation
 - An internal disciplinary investigation by the employer/fitness to practice/practice standards
 - Liaise with Ofsted/other regulatory bodies

The LADO can provide advice and guidance in respect of:

- How to liaise with and support the child involved and their family to ensure that the child's welfare remains paramount

- Confidentiality, General Data Protection Regulation and sharing information. All data will be kept confidential and secure
- How the allegation impacts on other children or responsibilities within the staff member or volunteer's home, work and community life

Due to the nature of the LADO process we may not be able to share any further information with you after you have made your referral, this does not mean that no action is taking place.

What happens at the conclusion of the Professional Allegation process?

- The LADO, in conjunction with the views of the employer, Social Care and the Police will make a recommendation as to whether or not on the balance of probabilities, the allegation is:
 - Substantiated (supported by evidence or where on the balance of probability abuse or harm is confirmed)
 - False (there is sufficient evidence to disprove the allegation)
 - Unfounded (no evidence which supports the allegation being made, or there is evidence to prove that the allegation is untrue or was mistaken)
 - Unsubstantiated (there is insufficient identifiable evidence to prove or disprove the allegation)
 - Malicious (ie deliberately invented)
- The LADO considers, with the employer, whether an onward referral is required to the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) and the professional's regulatory body if the staff member is deemed to be a future risk to children.

You can read more about the safeguarding guidance that we use by following the links below:

- Working Together 2018
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/working-together-to-secure-children-in-a-safe-and-effective-way>
- Keeping Children Safe in Education 2020
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/use-of-keeping-children-safe-in-education-part-4-guidance>
- South West Child Protection Procedures
<https://www.proceduresonline.com/swcpp/>
- Our Safeguarding Children Partnership's website
<https://ciosafeguarding.org.uk/scp>

- Disclosure and Barring Service guidance
<https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/disclosure-and-barring-service>

Need more help?

For more information and advice contact

Contact

E-mail: LADO@cornwall.gov.uk

Tel: 01872 326536

Other bitesize guides in this series

Guide for employees and volunteers who work with children

General guide for employers and voluntary agencies who work with children

What should I do if I have a concern about a child?

Contact the MARU: multiagencyreferralunit@cornwall.gov.uk or Tel: 0300 1231 116
or out of hours: 01208 251300 or Our Safeguarding Children Partnership website
<https://ciossafeguarding.org.uk/scp>

If you would like this information in another format please contact:

Cornwall Council, County Hall
Treyew Road, Truro TR1 3AY

Telephone: 0300 1234 101

Email: equality@cornwall.gov.uk

www.cornwall.gov.uk/togetherforfamilies