

Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) resources for practitioners October 2023

These resources are to support professionals managing allegations and relate to the role of the Salford Local Authority Designated Officer (known as the LADO).

Children and young people can be subject to harm by those who work with them in any setting. This may be by a professional, staff member, foster carer or volunteer

All allegations must be taken seriously and treated in accordance with agreed procedures. These procedures apply to all organisations within Salford who have contact with children and young people or provide staff or volunteers to work with or care for children and young people.

LADO Contact

LADO Allegations made against workers include those who are paid, unpaid, volunteer, agency, casual and self-employed as well as foster carers, and adoptive parents of children on Placement Orders. Concerns should all be reported to the Salford LADO.

This should be done within 24 hours of the incident.

If you have concerns about an adult working with children or young people, please report your concern using the Salford LADO referral form. For consultation the LADO referral form is to be completed and the LADO will contact the referrer within 24 hours.

Completed referrals forms should be emailed to LADO@salford.gov.uk – it is essential that all sections of the referral form are completed.

Legislation and Guidance

Referrals from Schools and Colleges should follow the statutory procedures set out in Keeping Children Safe in Education (2018) when allegations of abuse are made against teachers or other school staff (including volunteers). All other agencies and settings should follow Working Together to Safeguard Children.

LADO Criteria

These procedures should be used when an allegation is made that an adult has:

- behaved in a way that has harmed, or may have harmed a child
- possibly committed a criminal offence against, or related to a child; or
- behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates they 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.

In all cases the general principles outlined below will apply

. For convenience the term 'employer' is used to refer to organisations that have a working relationship with the individual against whom the allegation is made.

Employer Responsibility

At the initial stages the employer should **Fact Find** – this will include:

- obtain a written account of the allegation from the person to whom the allegation was made against
- record details of any potential witnesses and gather witness statements
- record the details of any discussions and the rationale for any decisions that have been made about the child(ren) and/or adult.
- Review CCTV or any additional sources of information
- Confirm the child(ren) are safeguarded with an agreed interim safety plan including support for the subject.

The LADO should be informed of all allegations that come to an employer's attention and appear to meet the criteria outlined above, so that they can consult other statutory agencies as appropriate.

Referrals to the Salford LADO must be made within 1 working day of an allegation being made.

All referrals need to be made using the Salford LADO referral form. It is essential that all sections of the form are completed.

The completed referral form should to be sent to LADO@salford.gov.uk

LADO Stages

On receipt of the referral, the LADO will contact the employer and:

- confirm that the child(ren) have been safeguarded and agree an interim safety plan
- consider whether further information is needed, seek HR advice.
- discuss details of the allegation considering the thresholds for LADO involvement
- determine whether there is enough evidence or information to indicate whether the allegation is unsubstantiated or false
- determine whether multi-agency investigation of the allegation is required to establish if a person has behaved in a way that has harmed, or may have harmed a child, possibly committed a criminal offence against, or related to a child or behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates they may pose a risk of harm to children
- discuss whether the employer has reached a decision about protective measures including any suspension.

Once an allegation has been made, the LADO's role is to:

- capture and co-ordinate the sharing of all the information relating to the case with the officers and agencies that need to be informed

- provide advice and guidance to the employers or voluntary organisations
- monitor and track the progress of the case through to its conclusion, with the aim to resolve it as quickly as possible.

In addition to dealing with individual cases, the LADO must also look at emerging patterns of behaviours

Timescales: Referrals to the LADO must be made within 24 hours of the incident.

The LADO has 5 working days to establish if a Managing Allegation Meeting is appropriate, the LADO will ensure the initial meeting includes the employer and relevant multi-agency partners .

All allegations should be resolved within three months unless there is an ongoing Police investigation in which Threshold for Managing Allegation can not be determined. In this instance the LADO will complete monthly tracking to ensure a timely conclusion.

Should the employer fact finding information or evidence be sufficient in concluding the LADO Threshold and process, the LADO will not wait to conclude.

In all cases the employer is responsible for updating the subject of the allegation and ensuring their welfare needs are met.