

Local Authority Designated Officer

A guide for professionals & volunteers who work with children

WHAT IS A LADO?

The Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) is responsible for managing allegations against adults who work with children. This involves working with Police, Children's Social Care, employers and other involved professionals. The LADO does not conduct investigations directly, but rather oversees and directs them to ensure thoroughness, timeliness and fairness. Ordinarily, to ensure impartiality, the LADO will not have direct contact with the adult against whom the allegation has been made, or the family of the child/children involved; but will ensure that both these parties have information regarding outcomes. The regional LADO procedures can be found at: <http://westmidlands.procedures.org.uk/ykpzy/statutory-child-protection-procedures/allegations-against-staff-or-volunteers>

WHEN SHOULD YOU CONTACT THE LADO?

You should contact the LADO within 1 working day of an incident arising where it appears that an allegation or concerns about a person who works with children, 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 they may pose a risk to children.
- Behaved or may have behaved in a way that indicates they may not be suitable to work with children (education staff)

The Safeguarding Lead in your organisation will need to assess whether to contact the LADO prior to discussing the concern with the individual, this will be assessed on an individual basis and should not happen if this will increase the level of risk to a child/ren. If the assessment determines that the level of risk will not increase, then initial fact-finding enquiries can be completed prior to contacting the LADO.

HOW TO CONTACT THE LADO?

If you need to make a formal referral please visit the Worcestershire Children First website and follow the link to the online portal to make your referral – link: [Are you worried about an adult who works with children? | Are you worried about an adult who works with children? | Worcestershire County Council](#) The LADO Team can be contacted on 01905 846221 or LADO@worcschildrenfirst.org.uk however all referrals must come via the portal.

WHAT HAPPENS WHEN YOU CONTACT THE LADO?

When you make a referral to the LADO, they will contact you as referrer to give you initial advice and guidance, you will also receive a response to your referral in writing either via secure email, portal or post.

In some cases, the Allegations may mean a Position of Trust Meeting is convened, this is independently chaired by the LADO and a record of this meeting will be provided to those in attendance. The LADO will:

- Advise employers/organisations on how to monitor and support the accused member of staff or volunteer during the process
- Monitor how the allegation impacts on other children and on the accused person and whether the allegation is part of a wider investigation

All LADO activity will be recorded securely on Children's Social Care Liquid Logic system.

FAMILY FRONT DOOR:

There may be a separate referral made to the Family Front Door to consider child protection enquiries in respect of connected children, you may then be involved with these enquiries in respect of attending a Strategy Discussion.

WHAT HAPPENS AT THE END OF THE-POSITION OF TRUST PROCESS??

The LADO will manage and oversee the investigations of the employer, Social Care and Police (where appropriate). Following this they will recommend whether the allegation is substantiated (taking-into-account the views of the employer, Social Care and Police). After each Position of Trust meeting a record of the meeting will be sent to everyone involved. Subsequent Position of Trust meetings may need to be held to review the investigation process.

When, having heard all the evidence, the LADO- believes the allegation is substantiated, they will advise on what action should be taken next and at what level. The LADO will decide, with the employer, whether an onward referral needs to be made to the appropriate regulatory body and the DBS (Disclosure & Barring Service), if the accused person is deemed to be a future risk to children.

ESCALATIONS:

If the LADO disagrees with the outcomes of an employer's investigation, they will escalate this to your individual safeguarding lead. If you disagree with the advice/outcomes given by the LADO, this can be raised directly with the Group Manager for the Service, Daniel Gray: dadams@worcschildrenfirst.org.uk