



South West Scotland
Community
Justice
Authority

South West Scotland CJA

Comments & Complaints Policy

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South West Scotland Community Justice Authority (CJA) is an independent statutory body established by the Management of Offenders etc. (Scotland) Act 2005. South West Scotland CJA covers the four local authority areas of Dumfries & Galloway, East, North and South Ayrshire and has planning, monitoring and reporting functions. Recognising that no one agency can tackle the complexities of offending in isolation it operates on a multi-agency basis with the aim of reducing reoffending and improving the management of offenders.

South West Scotland CJA comprises four elected members, one from each local authority area (CJA Board Members) and currently employs three members of staff (Chief Officer, Planning Officer and PA).

Why have a Comments and Complaints Policy?

South West Scotland Community Justice Authority (CJA) is committed to providing a high standard of service across all of its planning, monitoring and reporting activities. We actively encourage feedback and want you to tell us when we do well and also when we could have done better. In this way we can monitor areas of our work that may need improving or a policy that may need changing or updating.

Our Comments and Complaints Policy can only deal with comments and complaints directly related to the staff (including any temporary staff or secondees), board members or planning, monitoring and reporting activities of South West Scotland CJA. Comments or complaints regarding the staff or operational services of our partners remain the responsibility of that partner. Details of how to access our partner's complaints processes are included within this document. Should South West Scotland CJA receive a complaint regarding the staff or operational services of one of our partners we will refer that complaint to the appropriate agency.

What is a complaint?

If you feel that:

We have done something wrong.

We have failed to provide a particular planning, monitoring or reporting activity.

You are dissatisfied with the way we deliver a particular planning, monitoring or reporting activity.

You are not happy with the way you have been dealt with in person, by letter, or by telephone.

Please make use of the procedures set out in this policy.

How do I make a complaint?

Stage 1 – Informal Complaint

Informal complaints can be made by telephone or in writing and the complaint will be allocated to a member of staff to investigate. This is not part of the formal Complaints procedure however we will ensure that we will respond to your complaint within 10 working days.

If your initial complaint is not resolved, or you are not satisfied with the result then you should make a formal complaint to the CJA Chief Officer who will investigate.

Complaints about actions of the CJA Chief Officer or CJA Board Members will be investigated and resolved by the Convenor of the CJA.

Stage 2 - Formal Complaint

We will issue an acknowledgement issued in writing within of receipt of a formal complaint within 24 hours of us receiving it. A formal response will be issued in writing within 10 working days. Where a final response cannot be given within that time, a letter will be issued giving an estimated timescale for the final completion of the investigation.

If the CJA Chief Officer considers that the complaint does not require investigation they will consult the Convenor before bringing the matter to a conclusion.

When the CJA Chief Officer completes or otherwise terminates the investigation you will be informed by letter. Although we do everything we can to get things right, occasionally we may get things wrong. If this happens we will:

- Explain what has gone wrong;
- Apologise for our mistake; and
- Take action to put things right

What if I am still not satisfied?

South West Scotland CJA acknowledges that occasionally you may still remain dissatisfied with the outcome of a complaint and you can request a further review of the decision.

The Convenor will review any further submissions (if any) by you together with the CJA Chief Officer's report and will then respond by letter. This will be subject to a similar timescale as the original complaint.

In the event that you remain dissatisfied following the review, you have the right to complain to the Scottish Public Services Ombudsman. The Ombudsman can consider complaints about:
Administrative Failures;
Failure to Provide a Service;
Failures in a Service Provided.

Further details on how to complain to the Ombudsman can be obtained from the Ombudsman at

Scottish Public Services Ombudsman
4 Melville Street,
Edinburgh,
EH3 7NF,
Tel: 0870 011 5378,
Website: www.scottishombudsman.org.uk

If the complaint involves an alleged breach of the code of conduct against a Member of the Board, a complainant has the right to refer the matter to the

Standards Commission for Scotland,
Forsyth House,
Innova Campus,
Rosyth Europarc,
Rosyth,
KY112JU;
Tel:01383 428 033;
Website: www.standardscommissionscotland.org.uk

Contacting us

South West Scotland Community Justice Authority
Sovereign House, Suite 6
Academy Road
Irvine
KA12 8RL
Email: info@swscja.org.uk
Tel:01294 277968
Fax: 01294 277968
Website: www.swscja.org.uk

This document is also available to download on the CJA website www.swscja.org.uk or you can telephone the number above to request hardcopies.

Links to Statutory Partners' Complaints Policies

East Ayrshire Council

http://www.east-ayrshire.gov.uk/item_detail.asp?UIN=3788

Dumfries & Galloway Council

<http://www.dumgal.gov.uk/index.aspx?articleid=1245>

North Ayrshire Council

<http://www.north-ayrshire.gov.uk/CouncilAndGovernment/ConsultationsComplaintsAndCompliments/ComplaintsProcedure.aspx>

South Ayrshire Council

<http://www.south-ayrshire.gov.uk/contact/customerservices/procedure/>

Scottish Prison Service

<http://www.sps.gov.uk/default.aspx?documentid=410e4644-5df7-4474-ba5a-dae532911ba2>