

Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) - One Minute Guide:



What is it?

The Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) should be notified when it has been alleged that someone who works with children has:

- **Behaved in a way that has harmed, or may harm a child**
- **Possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child**
- **Behaved towards a child/children in a way that indicates they may pose a risk of harm to children**
- **Behaved in a way which indicates they are unsuitable to work with children**

The above criteria relates to the adult's behaviour in the **workplace**, the **community** and in their **home and social life**.

The LADO provides advice and guidance to employers and voluntary organisations, liaises with police and other agencies and has oversight of all investigations to ensure a timely, thorough and fair process.

What happens once a notification is accepted?

Allegations meeting the above criteria should be referred to the LADO within one working day (WTSC, 2018) using a LADO referral form. LADO referral forms can be accessed following an initial discussion with a LADO

The LADO will provide an initial response to the referrer within one working day advising the need for further action under the LADO procedures and where appropriate include involvement of other sectors including the police, social care, employers and regulatory bodies.

The initial evaluation will focus on the nature of the concern, safeguarding for the particular child and appropriate consideration for the practitioner concerned. Inter-agency Allegations Management Meetings are convened by the LADO to manage specific situations. If further action is necessary under LADO procedures, a LADO Allegations Management Meeting may be convened within 10 working days of this decision being made.

The LADO chairs the Allegations Management Meeting. The employer will always attend and other attendees may include Police, Social Care, HR and regulatory bodies i.e. Ofsted. The adult who the allegation has been made about **does not** attend.

The following will be considered in the Allegations Management Meeting: the details of the allegation and subject's employment; any children affected and immediate and wider safeguarding concerns and the need for:

- **A police investigation of a possible criminal offence;**
- **Children's social care enquiries and/or assessment about whether a child is in need of protection or services;**
- **Consideration by an employer of disciplinary action.**

A Review Allegations Management Meeting will consider the outcome of the investigation and determine whether the allegation is: **substantiated, unsubstantiated, false, malicious or unfounded.**

The LADO will retain a confidential record of the allegation and subsequent actions for future reference.

Each agency will use their own procedures to investigate an allegation. The LADO will offer guidance around any safeguarding concerns, for example an individual's contact with children while the allegations are being investigated.

What should practitioners do?

Anybody who has concerns about a practitioner working or volunteering with **children** should discuss their concerns with their manager and/or their Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL). This should help clarify whether the criteria for a LADO referral has been met. If so, any practitioner can access advice from LADO and make a referral.

If required, a referral form should be completed which can be found at [Safeguarding children policies and procedures](#). Completed LADO referral forms must be sent to the LADO inbox **LADO@barnsley.gov.uk**

Key contacts and further information

The Local Authority Designated Officer in Barnsley can be contacted Monday to Friday on **or via 01226 772341 or email LADO@barnsley.gov.uk**.

If you want to know more about the LADO role, or managing allegations against staff, you can read more at [Allegations against Staff, Carers or Volunteers](#)

There is a separate process to follow if concerns relate to a practitioner who works or volunteers with vulnerable adults. Please contact Customer Services 01226 773300 for more information about this.

If there are urgent child protection concerns, members of the public should contact 01226 772423. If a child is at immediate risk of significant harm, call the police on **101 or 999**.