**Allegations Against Professionals**

**Making a referral to the Local Authority Designated Officer and Possible Outcomes**

The LADO (Local Authority Designated Officer) provides advice and guidance to employers and other individuals/organisations who have concerns relating to an adult who works with children and young people (including volunteers, agency staff and foster carers) or who is in a position of authority and having regular contact with children (eg religious leaders or school governors).

There may be concerns about workers who have:

* behaved in a way that has harmed or may have harmed a child
* possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child
* behaved towards a child, or behaved in other ways that suggests they may be unsuitable to work with children

**What should be referred to the LADO?**

Any concern that meets the criteria above should be referred. Initially it may be unclear how serious the allegation is. If there's any doubt, the LADO or the designated safeguarding lead person in your agency should be contacted for advice.

**What the LADO does:**

The first step will be to offer an initial consultation about the concern. This may consist of advice and guidance regarding the most appropriate way of managing the allegation. The LADO will:

* help establish what the 'next steps' should be in terms of investigating the matter further
* liaise with the police and other agencies, and arrange for an allegations meeting to be held if required; if the case is complex there may be a series of meetings
* monitor and maintain an overview of cases to ensure they're dealt with as quickly as possible consistent with a thorough and fair process
* ensure child protection procedures are initiated where the child is considered to be at risk of significant harm
* ensure the appropriate agencies are involved in the investigation
* ensure advice is provided in relation to the adult's remaining in post over the course of the investigation
* ensure issues of sharing information with parents and other relevant individuals are considered
* assist an employer in decisions about a person's suitability to remain in the children's workforce, and whether a referral should be made to the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) or the appropriate regulatory or professional body
* In cases where the adult is unaware of the concern or allegation, it may not be appropriate to tell them immediately and may prejudice a potential police investigation. The LADO will provide advice.

**Outcomes**

The outcomes from a LADO referral may include:

* finding that the allegation is malicious
* finding that the allegation is unsubstantiated
* finding that the allegation is substantiated
* finding that the allegation is false
* finding that the allegation is unfounded
* internal investigation by the employer including consideration of  disciplinary procedures
* a police investigation
* police prosecution
* Where the adult is reinstated there may be recommendations in relation to additional support, monitoring or training.
* Where an individual is dismissed from their post, a referral must be made to the DBS which makes decisions on whether individuals should be barred from working with children.
* Compromise agreements are not an acceptable resolution to a concern, and even if someone resigns it should not prevent a full and thorough investigation into the matter.

[**LADO Protocol & Procedure - April 2018**](https://www.safeguardinglewisham.org.uk/assets/1/lado_protocol_and_procedure_24_april_2018.pdf)

**To make a referral to the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO), please email a**[LADO Referral Form](https://www.safeguardinglewisham.org.uk/assets/1/001_-_lado_-_lewisham_referral_form.doc) **to**[LewishamLADO@Lewisham.gov.uk](mailto:LewishamLADO@Lewisham.gov.uk)**.**

**Current LADO Contact Details:**

London Borough of Lewisham, 1st Floor Laurence House, 1 Catford Road, SE6 4RU

Office Tel:   020 8314 3114

Quality Assurance Duty Desk: 020 8314 9177

Quality Assurance Team Manager:  020 8314 7280

**Useful Links**

[London Child Protection Procedures](http://www.londoncp.co.uk/chapters/alleg_staff.html)

[London Safeguarding Children's Board](http://www.londonscb.gov.uk/)

[Working Together to Safeguard Children 2015](http://www.workingtogetheronline.co.uk/chapters/chapter_two.html)

[Keeping Children Safe in Education](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/keeping-children-safe-in-education--2)

* Reviewed

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