Our Complaints Procedure

DVACT-PAI
Assessments & Interventions

About this leaflet

We recognise that people accessing our services may have experienced domestic abuse, trauma, safeguarding interventions or involvement in family court proceedings. We understand that raising a complaint can be difficult and may require sensitivity, patience and reassurance. This leaflet sets our commitment to parents who use our services and outlines how we handle any concerns that you may have about our services or staff.

Our Key Principles

We are committed to:



- Always having the safety of your child at the centre of our concerns.
- Making your time in assessment or intervention as helpful as possible to move your case forward.
- Listening to and acknowledging your views and experiences.
- Providing an independent view of any risks to your child and being transparent about what information we have used to base those views on
- Responding promptly and transparently to any concerns you may have about our service.
- Resolving any complaints effectively and efficiently.
- Learning from you to improve our services.

Our commitment to you and your child/ren

DVACT-PAI are instructed by family courts or local authorities to provide independent assessments and interventions as part of child protection procedures.

If you engage with our services we promise to respectfully listen to and acknowledge your views and experiences. However, we will always prioritise the safety of your child, or children you may come into contact with. Our assessment reports will clearly outline the independent views of the expert assessor involved in your case based on the documents and interviews. The assessor will use this information to provide recommendations about how your case can move forward while managing any risks.

You may not agree with the assessors views, in which case you can ask your solicitor to respond with further questions or ask the court to order the assessor to attend a hearing and give evidence.

If you have concerns about the assessor or the accuracy of the assessment you can follow the complaints procedure outlined in this document.

What to do if you have concerns

If you wish to raise concerns about your assessment or make a complaint you need to send this in writing by email to the relevant team.

For the assessments team email info.pai@dvact.org, for programmes email programmes@dvact.org. For a member of our Register you should address your complaint to the register team at expertsregister@dvact.org.



You should Include:

- Your contact details
- A clear description of the issue
- Any relevant dates, times, and names
- Any supporting documentation or evidence.

What complaints we can consider

You can make a complaint about any expert or staff member that has been employed DVACT-PAI to deliver a service to you if you feel they have not acted according to our standards or procedures. You can also raise a complaint about an expert on our Register of Expert Domestic Abuse Risk Assessors.

Please note that if an assessment has been completed and you do not agree with the experts views within the assessment we are unable to deal with that within this complaints procedure. In those cases you must speak to your solicitor about challenging these views within the court process.

We are unable to deal with complaints about the actions of the local authority, social workers, solicitors, the family courts, the police or anyone else involved in your case that is not employed by DVACT-PAI or a member of our Register.

Our complaint handling procedure

Acknowledgment: We will acknowledge receipt of your complaint within 3 working days. We will provide you with a copy of this procedure and our contact details.

Threshold: Should you make a complaint about a suitability assessment or suspension from a programme it is important to note that DVACT-PAI is a private company and reserves the right to refuse access to our interventions. The threshold will not be met if your complaint concerns an assessors decision that an intervention is not suitable at the present time or if your place should be suspended or withdrawn.

If your complaint concerns an assessment report we will be unable to uphold a complaint that relates to a disagreement about the assessor's independent expert opinion. In these cases you will need to discuss your objections with your solicitor and your disagreement of their opinion should be addressed within the court process.

Investigation: Should your complaint meet threshold we will thoroughly investigate your complaint, gathering all relevant information including speaking to relevant staff members and we may contact you for further information or clarification.

Response: We will respond to your complaint within 20 working days. Our response will include:

- A summary of the complaint.
- The outcome of the investigation.
- Any actions taken or to be taken.
- An explanation of our decision.

Escalation: If you are dissatisfied with our response, you may escalate the complaint to the team clinical manager. We will provide you with the contact details of the higher authority and follow a similar procedure for the escalated complaint.

Further escalation: If you remain dissatisfied with our response you can contact our complaints officer and Director of DV-ACT Ltd Claire Verney. Claire can be reached at claireverney.pai@dvact.org

Confidentiality

We will maintain confidentiality throughout the investigation, unless the investigation leads us to believe there is a risk to you, children or others.

Learning and Improvement

We will review all complaints to identify areas for improvement and implement any necessary changes to our services and procedures.

This procedure will be reviewed regularly to ensure it remains effective and relevant.

Compliments and Positive Feedback

We also welcome compliments and feedback about what worked well. Your feedback helps us recognise good practice and improve our services.

You may wish to tell us when:

- a programme facilitator has provided an excellent service;
- an assessment has been particularly helpful;
- a programme has supported you to make positive changes;
- our service has helped you keep your child or family safe;
- a member of staff has demonstrated professionalism or compassion;
- a member of staff has gone above and beyond expectations.

Compliments can be sent to:
Compliments and Feedback Lead: Barbara Newman
Email: info.pai@dvact.org
Tel: 0203 9678368

