

## **APPEALS POLICY**

As part of Stepping Stone Projects commitment to provide a fair and open service to all applicants, stakeholders, customers and advocates, we operate an appeal process that allows people to appeal against a decision made within the service.

All customers have the right of appeal against any decisions that Stepping Stone Projects makes in relation to the delivery of any of our services. Applicants have the right to appeal in relation to the outcome of a needs assessment (interview) and initial risk assessment, and the subsequent decision as to whether or not they are accepted into a service.

Customers who have been accepted onto a service can appeal against any decisions made about the termination of a support service or tenancy, or when they disagree with decisions made regarding their support and action planning, or needs and risk assessment reviews. In addition to this general appeals policy, separate appeals procedures are in place with regard to notices served on residents of the intention to seek possession of their property, and customers will receive details of these procedures when the notice seeking possession is served.

All customers will receive a copy of the appeal's process in their Customer Handbook. Supported Housing Workers or Housing Management Officers will discuss this with customers during their induction into the service.

The appeals process empowers customers to positively challenge decisions that they disagree with. The process is an opportunity for the customer to present their case and be heard.

All appeals will be clearly documented, notes taken at each stage of the process and the customer will be advised of the outcome in the manner they prefer, whether this is face to face, telephone, letter, text or email.

The outcome of the appeal is final and there will be no further stages to the process.

This policy and procedure will be reviewed annually together with the number of appeals to ensure that the policy is working effectively and does not operate in a way which prevents appeals being made.

## **APPEALS PROCEDURE**

### **Referral Needs and Risk Assessment**

To appeal against a decision in relation to the outcome of the needs assessment (interview) process, and associated risk assessment, the applicant or referring agent should write to the Central Referral Team (CRT), at the address supplied below or email [CRT@stepping-stone.org.uk](mailto:CRT@stepping-stone.org.uk), within ten working days of the date on the outcome letter.

The Central Referral Team will send an acknowledgement, record the appeal and arrange to have the needs or risk assessment process reviewed.

As part of the review of the outcome of the need's assessment interview; the reviewing Operations Manager will review the initial Referral Form; Needs and Risk Assessment Form and any supporting documentation. The Operations Manager may also request further information from other agencies or housing providers and, if it is felt necessary, a re-interview will be arranged and the applicant will be offered the opportunity to be accompanied by a friend or advocate to that meeting.

Once the review has been completed, the applicant will be advised of the decision, in writing, within 10 working days.

### **Service Delivery**

To appeal against a decision to withdraw a support service from a customer, or to amend the service delivery arrangements with regard to support planning and risk management, Customers should write to or telephone the relevant Operations Manager, within ten working days of the action being carried out which they wish to appeal against. All written correspondence should be sent to the address below.

Upon receipt of the appeal, this will be forwarded to the relevant Operations Manager who will review the process and advise the customer of their final decision within ten working days of receipt of the appeal request.

### **Housing Management – tenancy/occupancy agreements**

Customers who wish to appeal decisions taken to bring their tenancy or occupancy agreement to an end should follow the appeals procedures that will be provided when the notice is issued.

Stepping Stone Projects

P.O. Box 153  
Rochdale OL16 1FR

**If you are not satisfied with the decision**

If a customer is not satisfied with the outcome of any of the reviews, the matter can be referred to the Director of Resources/Operations. The Director of Resources/Operations will review the appeal and a final decision will be reached within 10 working days of the review being requested.

This will be the last opportunity for a customer or applicant to appeal.

### APPEALS FLOWCHART

