



# One minute guide

## Managing allegations—the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO)

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### What is the Local Authority Designated Officer?

The Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) is the person who should be notified when it has been alleged that a professional or volunteer who works with children has:

- Behaved in a way that has harmed a child, or may have harmed a child;
- Possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child;
- Behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates she or he may pose a risk of harm to children; or
- Behaved or may have behaved in a way that indicated they may not be suitable to work with children.

The role involves having oversight of allegations about practitioners which meet the above criteria, ensuring that these allegations or concerns about adults working or volunteering with children are recorded appropriately, monitored and progressed in a timely and confidential way. It is also important to ensure that the voice of the child or young person is heard and taken into account at every stage.

The responsibilities of the local authority in relation to the LADO role are outlined on page 60 of [Working Together 2018](#), statutory guidance produced by the Department for Education. There is also useful information on the [LSCP website](#) including guidance about steps to consider before a notification is made.

### What happens once a notification is accepted?

A notification will be accepted by the LADO if it meets the criteria set out above. The notification form can be accessed by contacting the LADO service at: [LADO@leeds.gov.uk](mailto:LADO@leeds.gov.uk) or by calling tel: 0113 3789687.

Notifications will be subject to an initial evaluation and where appropriate 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 also convened by the LADO to manage specific situations.

Each agency will use their own procedures to investigate an allegation. The LADO will offer guidance around any safeguarding concerns.

### What should practitioners do?

Anybody who has concerns about a practitioner working or volunteering with children should discuss their concerns with their manager, HR provider and/ or their organisation's Designated Safeguarding Lead. This discussion should help to clarify whether the criteria for making a LADO notification has been met.

If it is still unclear whether the criteria has been met after this discussion, practitioners can contact the LADO on 0113 37 89687 for further discussion and advice.

There is a separate process to follow if concerns relate to a practitioner who works or volunteers with vulnerable adults. Please get in touch with the contact centre for adult services on tel: 0113 2224401 for more information about this process.

### Urgent child protection concerns should be discussed directly

Usual safeguarding procedures apply if it is suspected that the criteria for a LADO notification has been met. If anyone suspects that a child is either experiencing or at risk of harm:

- Members of the public should contact Children's Social Work Service on tel: 0113 2224403 between 8.30am – 5pm.
- Practitioners involved with the child or family should contact the Duty and Advice Team on tel: 0113 3760336 between 8.30am to 5pm.
- Outside of these office hours, practitioners should contact the Children's Emergency Duty team on tel: 0113 5350600.

### Key contacts and further information

The Local Authority Designated Officers in Leeds can be contacted Monday to Friday on 0113 37 89687, operating a duty system for notifications.

They can also be contacted by email via [lado@leeds.gov.uk](mailto:lado@leeds.gov.uk).

If you want to know more about the LADO role, or managing allegations against staff, you can consult the managing allegations pages on the LSCP [website](#).