

**Tower Hamlets Multi-Agency Escalation and Resolution Policy**

**Introduction**

When working with practitioners from other agencies, at times there will be differences of opinion or concerns about professional practice in relation to a child, young person or family. Throughout our work the safety and wellbeing of the child or young person is always the primary concern, and professional disagreements must not obstruct this. If you feel that a practitioner, or an agency, is not acting in the best interests of the child, young person or family, you have a responsibility to respectfully challenge the practitioner, or agency, and escalate that concern if resolution is not achieved. All agencies are responsible for ensuring that their staff are supported, and know how to appropriately challenge, escalate and resolve intra-agency concerns and challenges about a child or young person’s wellbeing and the response to their safeguarding needs. This procedure is not designed to replace the statutory complaints processes established within partner agencies including the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) process. It is important that practitioners feel empowered and supported within their agencies to challenge aspects of practice that they do not feel are in the best interests of the child or young person.

**The escalation must be complete within that time scale or a timescale that protects the child from harm (whichever is less).**

**Step-by-Step Process**

**Step 1 (day 1):** Most professional disagreements can be resolved between professionals by having a **conversation about the reasons for the difference of opinion** and without having to escalate. The matter should be recorded within each agency on the child’s record. When concerns arise, the worker must raise the issue with the other agency within one working day. If the matter remains unresolved, it is the individual’s responsibility to notify their line manager/ designated/ named safeguarding lead who will move to step 2.

**Step 2 (no later than day 3):** Escalation to the **Line Manager/ Safeguarding Leads**. The respective parties must identify explicitly what the problem is and what the practitioners aim to achieve. This challenge and the outcome should be recorded and fed back to the practitioner who raised the concern.

**Step 3 (no later than day 9):** If safeguarding leads/line managers are unable to resolve the concerns, they must be escalated to a **Senior manager/ Director** (or in the case of schools, the Chair of Governors alongside the Head Teacher). The outcome of the challenge should also be fed back to the practitioner who raised the concerns.

**Step 4 (no later than day 15):** In cases where the senior managers are unable to resolve the concern, it should be escalated to the **Statutory Partners Executive**. Please send your escalation to THSCP@towerhamlets.gov.uk under a high importance email titled ‘THSCP Escalation’, this will be sent on the Statutory Partners including the current chair. Note the THSCP chair is rotational between:

* **James Thomas, Director of Children’s Services (London Borough of Tower Hamlets),**
* **Korkor Ceasar, Associate Director for Safeguarding Children (NHS North East London),**
* **James Conway, Detective Chief Superintendent (Met Police**)

**Key Contacts:**

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| **Health** | **Name** | **Email** | **Phone** |
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| **Police** | **Name**  | **Email**  | **Phone**  |
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