Guidance for referrals or requests for advice (consultations)

The Local Authority Designated Officer’s primary function is to provide oversight of any investigation into an incident where an allegation of abuse or harm has been made against a professional or volunteer who has contact with children as part of their work or activities.

It is your responsibility, as an employer or voluntary sector organisation to contact the Local Authority Designated Officer within one working day of an incident arising and prior to any further investigation taking place where it appears that an allegation or concern about a person who works with children, has:

* Behaved or may have behaved in a way that has harmed or may have harmed a child
* Committed or may have committed a criminal offence against or related to a child
* Behaved or may have behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates they may pose a risk of harm to children
* Behaved or may have behaved in a way that indicates they may not be suitable to work with children

If you have any child protection concerns directly relating to the alleged child victim or victims, please contact the First Response Team on 0117 903 6444. When the offices are closed call the Emergency Duty Team on 01454 615 165. If you have any concerns in relation to a vulnerable adult or the professional works with adults, please contact Care Direct on 0117 922 2700.

It is important that the Allegation Referral Form is completed as fully as possible to ensure the Local Authority Designated Officer is able to effectively provide appropriate oversight of any investigation.

Information on the Allegation Referral Form can be shared with other agencies as part of the process, unless this puts an individual at risk of harm or inhibits the investigation of the police or another agency.

Find the referral form and information leaflets about the Local Authority Designated Officer and process for employers and employees – [LADO Concerns Professionals Bristol Referral Form (bristolsafeguarding.org)](https://bristolsafeguarding.org/children/lado-concerns-about-professionals/)