

ACA UK Intergroup Complaints Procedure

On receipt of a safeguarding complaint, the procedure is as follows:

1. A member of the safeguarding committee is informed that a complaint has been made.
2. The complaint is disseminated to the area safeguarding representative
3. Contact with the Complainant is made and a full assessment is undertaken
4. When a personal approach fails or the recipient feels that this method is inappropriate, the recipient may approach a group member or another trusted servant for help and guidance, feeling secure in the belief that any safeguarding issue will be considered as a serious matter. Then:
 - 1) The alleged offender should be told of the complaint as soon as possible.
 - 2) If the situation is sufficiently serious or complex, it may be necessary to involve members from outside the group.
 - 3) If the group conscience decides it necessary, unacceptable behaviour may result in temporary exclusion from the group. The ultimate decision on the return of the offender rests with the group conscience. As per Tradition 1, the common welfare of the meeting comes first.
 - 4) The reporting of safeguarding instances to the appropriate outside agencies may be required
5. If it appears that a criminal offence has been committed, or where a safeguarding issue has arisen that ought to be reported to the relevant authorities, the Complainant will be encouraged to report the matter. Where it is not possible to resolve the matter within the group (for example due to fear of reprisals), groups also have the authority to exclude individuals if necessary.
6. Upon assessment, a Safeguarding Committee representative attends the meeting concerned and clarifies the safeguarding guidelines, how to manage safeguarding issues and implement safeguarding practices. It will be for the meeting to determine its conscience in line with Traditions 2 and 4.
7. The representative to re-visit or receive feedback on the meeting actions
8. If the feedback suggests that nothing has changed, the Safeguarding Committee will continue to support the meeting in endeavouring to create a safe meeting space and comply with Trad 1 and 5. However, if the matter under consideration is of sufficient severity to affect ACA as a whole (such as reputational damage caused by legal complaints of abuse), the meeting will be informed that it may lose its listing on the ACA UK web site.