

COMPLAINT RESOLUTION PROCEDURE

If a complaint relates to parish life, it should be raised with the (parish) priest in the first instance. Where such discussion does not resolve the matter, the formal procedure as detailed below, will be followed.

If a complaint raises safeguarding issues, it will be dealt with under our separate Safeguarding Complaints Policy (details of which can be found on the Archdiocesan website).

When difficulties or dissatisfactions arise in the church community, the Archdiocese of Glasgow is committed to resolving these amicably wherever possible. We take all complaints seriously and handle them sensitively.

The Archdiocese has developed this Complaint Resolution procedure in order to:

- ensure that complaints are investigated fairly and a response given in a timely way and, wherever possible, that relationships are repaired
- provide a fair complaints procedure which is clear and easy to use for anyone wishing to make a complaint
- address concerns which have been raised
- encourage resolution of complaints by informal means wherever possible
- gather information that helps us to improve what we do.

A complaint is an expression of dissatisfaction with a real or perceived problem arising from words or actions that have directly affected the individual making the complaint. A complaint may be made if a person thinks that the Archdiocese has:

- done something wrong
- failed to do something it should have done or
- treated them unfairly.

This may involve the Archdiocese as a whole, or it may concern an individual member of staff, a member of the clergy or a volunteer who acts on behalf of the Archdiocese.

If a complaint is deemed to be vexatious or frivolous, the Archdiocese reserves the right to reject it. A vexatious complaint is one that is pursued solely to harass, annoy or subdue somebody; something that is unreasonable, without foundation, frivolous, repetitive, burdensome or unwarranted.

Stage 1: Raising a formal complaint

A formal complaint should only be raised if local efforts to resolve the problem informally have proved unsuccessful.

A formal complaint must be made within two months of the incident in writing by email or post to the Chancellor who will investigate the matter in an attempt to resolve it. A complainant's letter should provide:

- details about the complaint (when, where, what happened, who was involved etc.)
- the name and postal address of the complainant for acknowledgement and correspondence.

The contact details are as follows:

The Chancellor
Archdiocese of Glasgow
196 Clyde Street, Glasgow G1 4JY

Following investigation, in normal circumstances, we aim to respond to a complaint in writing within 15 working days of its receipt. In the response the complainant will be updated (normally by post to the address provided) on progress and resolution, unless:

- the situation requires us to respect the privacy of individuals who may be affected (In these circumstances it may not be possible to provide detailed results of investigations or reveal what actions were taken in response.)
- the complainant has said that they do not want to receive a response.

Stage 2: Requesting a review of a Stage 1 decision

If a complainant believes that one or both of the following grounds is fulfilled, a review can be requested:

- that new and compelling information relating to the original complaint has come to light since the original complaint was made
- that the stage 1 process has not been appropriately followed.

The complainant should make a written request for such a review, stating the grounds on which the request is made and providing supporting evidence. Such a request must be made within 15 days of the Stage 1 decision being communicated.

The contact details are as follows:

The Vicar General
Archdiocese of Glasgow
196 Clyde Street, Glasgow G1 4JY

Normally, the review will be carried out by the Resolution Committee – a group appointed by the Archbishop including lay assessors – who will advise the Vicar General.

The Vicar General will aim to complete the review within three months, but this may take longer depending on the particular circumstances.

The findings of the Stage 2 Review process are final and will be communicated to the complainant in writing.

Please remember that any allegation regarding abuse of a minor or vulnerable person should be made directly to our Diocesan Safeguarding Advisor, as this procedure is not designed to deal with safeguarding concerns or complaints.