

# Providing a witness statement to the SSSC



**Easy read booklet**

# 1. Who we are



We are the **Scottish Social Services Council**.

We make sure **social service workers** in Scotland give people good care.



We can **investigate** when we receive information about a social service worker that causes concern about whether they provide good care (a **concern**).

**Investigate** means we will try to find out what happened. We will speak to people and look at documents to find out the facts.



After we have finished our investigation, we will make a **decision** about the concern. We will decide if anything should be done about it.

## 2. What this booklet is about



One of the things we do to investigate concerns is to speak to **witnesses**. This is called **taking a statement**.



A witness is someone who speaks about what they have seen or heard. This will normally be about the concern we are investigating.



We will take a note of what you tell us. We will type up a **statement**. The statement will record what you told us about the concern. We will use the statement to help us make a decision. A statement is sometimes called **evidence**.



This booklet tells you about why we want to speak to you. It also gives you other information about giving us a witness statement.

### 3. Why we need a statement from you



We might have asked you to provide a statement if:

- you told us about a concern
- your name has been given to us as someone who knows about the concern
- we think you have other information about the concern that is important.



Witness statements help us understand the concern and how you feel about what happened.



To find out more about our investigations, you can visit our website and click [on this blue link](#).

## 4. Why we need to take statements



Witnesses are really important. Without witnesses, it can be difficult for us to investigate a concern.



Without evidence from witnesses, we may not have enough evidence to meet the legal test. We call this having **insufficient evidence**.



We are not able to force you to give a statement. It is up to you. It might be more difficult for us to investigate the concern without a statement from you.



We understand giving a statement can be worrying. Please talk to us if there is anything you are worried about.

## 5. Planning the statement

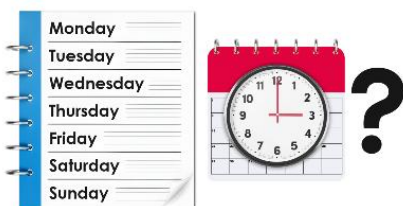


We will email, phone or write to you to make a plan for the statement.



It is up to you how you would like to speak to us. We normally take statements over the phone, but we can also:

- meet you in person
- take the statement on an online video call.



We will take the statement on a day and at a time that you are happy with.



Please tell us if there is anything you would like us to do which would make giving a statement easier for you.

## 6. Supporter



If it would help you, you can have someone with you when you give the statement. This is called a **Supporter**.



The Supporter should not be:

- the social service worker we are investigating
- another witness
- someone else that has investigated the concern.



The Supporter should not say anything for you when you are giving your statement. It is important that your statement is your own words.

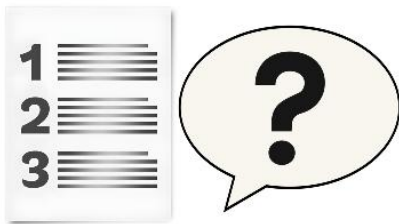


Please tell us if you would like to have a Supporter with you when you give your statement.

## 7. Taking the statement



An **Investigator** or a **Solicitor** will take the statement from you. Investigators and Solicitors are employed by the SSSC to investigate concerns.



They will have some questions for you which they will have thought about before they speak to you.



The questions might be about things like:

- your name
- what you saw, heard or did
- how you felt about what happened
- what the social service worker says happened.



You might already have spoken to other people about what happened, such as the police.



If you have spoken to other people before speaking to us, we will try to avoid asking you the same questions again. We might need to ask you some questions again, just to check you still feel the same way.



We might need to ask you different questions that you were not asked before.



If you do not know an answer to a question, or cannot remember something, that is ok. Just tell the Investigator or Solicitor taking the statement.

## 8. After the statement has been taken



After the call or meeting, the SSSC Investigator or Solicitor will type up a statement for you.



They will send the statement to you, either by email or by post.



You can look at the statement and make any changes you want to it.

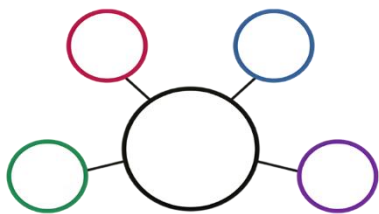


Once you are happy with the statement, you can then send the statement back by post or email. You will need to either sign the statement or email us to say you are happy with it.

## 9. What happens after the statement is finished



The SSSC Investigator or Solicitor will use your final statement to help make a decision.



The social service worker we are investigating may see your statement at some point.



This is because it is important the social service worker knows what evidence we have. This is part of making sure our investigation is fair.



We will take out any private information about you before giving your statement to the social service worker.



Speak to the SSSC Investigator or Solicitor if you are worried about your statement being given to the social service worker.



Let the SSSC Investigator or Solicitor know if you would like to be told what is happening with the investigation and when a final decision has been made.

## 10. Hearings



Once the investigation has finished, a **hearing** may take place. A hearing involves a number of different people listening to information about the concern and making a decision.



If we hold a hearing, we may ask you to come to the hearing as a witness.



If a hearing is taking place, the SSSC Investigator or Solicitor will speak to you about this. It would be up to you if you wanted to be a witness at the hearing.



We will provide more information about the hearing if you are asked to be there as a witness.

## 11. Help with being a witness



We understand that being a witness can be tricky and stressful.



If you feel worried, scared, or upset, there's a phone line you can call where people will listen and help. You don't have to pay to call them, and you can talk to them any time — day or night.



You can call the support line on 0808 169 4430 (or +44 141 271 7133 if you're calling from abroad).



If you need other support, please speak to the SSSC Investigator or Solicitor. They may be able to help.

## 12. More information



This is the end of this booklet.



To find out more, you can visit our website if you click [on this blue link](#).



On our website you can find more information about:

- investigations
- hearings
- being a witness
- decisions.



In this Easy Read document, we used pictures from Photosymbols.