



Referring Someone to the Community Advocacy Service

This information sheet is about referring someone for advocacy. If you have any questions, or if you need this information in another format, please call us on 01508 491210.

Who can I refer for advocacy support?

We are only able to accept referrals for someone who:

- Is **18 years old** or over
- Lives in **Norfolk**
- Is **disabled** (including physical and learning disabilities as well as mental health needs)
- Has **no other support** with their current issue
- Needs advocacy on a **specific issue**, rather than general support (e.g. help with post)

What issues can an advocate support someone with?

An advocate **can** support someone around:

- Adult social care
- Mental health
- Health care
- Housing
- Employment
- Children's Services

What can an advocate NOT support with?

We **cannot** provide support around:

- Welfare benefits
- Attending court
- Issues that require legal advice
- Complaints against an organisation the person is no longer involved with
- Issues that have already been considered at Ombudsman level.
- Post-court LAC reviews when a final decision has been made that a child/children will not be returning to their parent
- Police and the criminal justice system
- Employment tribunals
- NHS complaints
- Children's education and special educational needs

In addition to the areas above, we **cannot** work with people who:



- Already have support with their issue
- Are carers for disabled people but are not disabled themselves
- Are currently in prison
- Are experiencing an immediate mental health crisis
- Are on a Community Treatment Order or under Section 2, Section 3, Section 37 or Section 41 of the Mental Health Act (these people are entitled to a statutory advocate)

Do you offer face-to-face support?

We currently do a mixture of in-person and remote work. If a client wants us to attend an in-person meeting we are more than happy to do this if we can.

However, travelling to an in-person appointment takes more time than remote meetings and so is not always possible. Please note we cannot switch to attending something in-person once we have agreed to attend remotely.

Can an advocate attend every meeting/appointment with a client?

Advocates can only attend meetings and appointments that are relevant to the issue they are supporting someone with. Sometimes an advocate is asked to attend two different meetings at the same time, and when this happens we will attend whichever meeting was booked in first.

How do I refer someone for advocacy?

To refer someone into our advocacy service, please fill out the online form on our website (www.equallives.org.uk/advocacyreferral). If you cannot complete the form please call us and we will arrange for someone to complete it with you over the phone.

Can I refer via NCAN (Norfolk Community Advice Network)?

You can submit an initial referral via NCAN, but due to the complexity of our work we need more information than can be provided on the system. For this reason, if we receive a referral via NCAN we will reply with a link to our online form and will ask you to fill it in. We would encourage you to go directly to www.equallives.org.uk/advocacyreferral instead.

Any other questions?

If you have a question about a potential referral, you can get in touch by emailing advocacy@equallives.org.uk or by calling us on 01508 491210 (press option 3 for advocacy).