



Jersey Care  
Commission

# **Escalation and Enforcement Policy**

**September 2023**

## Version Control

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## SECTION 1

### 1. Introduction

The Jersey Care Commission ('the Commission') is the independent regulator of health and social care services in Jersey.

The Commission was established under the provisions of the Regulation of Care (Jersey) Law 2014 ('the Law'). Its role is to regulate, inspect and support the improvement of care services in meeting the needs of people who use and rely upon these services. Its ambition is to ensure that people receive high-quality, safe and person-centred care, where the rights, needs and choices of individuals are at the heart of service delivery.

The services which the Commission regulates include care homes providing nursing and personal care or personal support for people of all ages with a range of health and social care needs, care provided to people in their own homes, adult day care services, residential care services for adults and children and children's social care.

The Commission's work is based upon five core values:

- **A person-centred approach** – we put the needs and the voices of people using health and social care services at the heart of everything we do
- **Integrity** – we will be objective and impartial in our dealings with people and organisations
- **Openness and accountability** – we will act fairly and transparently, and will be responsible for our actions
- **Efficiency and excellence** – we strive to continually improve and provide the best possible quality and value from our work
- **Engagement** – we will work together with, and seek the views of, those using, providing, funding and planning health and social care services, in developing all aspects of our work.

In applying these core values, the Commission makes sure that health and social care services provide people with safe, effective, compassionate, high-quality care. When there are occasions where this is not fully evidenced, the Commission will encourage care services to make the necessary improvements.

The Commission will provide guidance about how to improve and will seek appropriate assurances from the responsible person or registered manager that the required changes have occurred.

Whenever poor standards of care are identified, or where registered person(s) and managers do not meet the required Standards or are in breach of the Regulations, the Commission has a range of powers which enable it to intervene to protect the public and to hold regulated activities, including responsible individuals and registered managers, to account.

Typically, the Commission will adopt a **stepped or graduated approach** to escalation and enforcement.

The Commission is committed to upholding the best regulatory practice principles adopted by the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD). Such principles include those of evidence-based enforcement, risk focus and proportionality, transparent governance, responsive regulation, compliance promotion and professionalism.

This Escalation and Enforcement Policy (“the Policy”) sets out the approach the Commission will take when investigating and responding to alleged or confirmed breaches of Regulations or Standards.

The Policy is divided into distinct sections including:

- Escalation (section 2)
- Review (section 3)
- Enforcement (section 4)

## **1.1 Definitions**

### **Escalation**

This is the process which the Commission will follow when there are concerns, or there is evidence that Regulations and/or the Standards have been breached. The Commission may choose to meet with a care provider, state clearly what concerns have given rise to the escalation and direct the provider to undertake corrective or preventative action.

## **Enforcement**

The Commission will consider taking enforcement action where there is evidence of actual or potential risks to the safety of care receivers and/or when there are concerns that the Regulations are being breached, or when Standards are not being met. Enforcement is a formal and robust method of ensuring that a regulated activity returns to full compliance with the Regulations or Standards.

The Commission will normally only take enforcement action when interventions undertaken as part of escalation have failed to achieve the desired outcome. However, some breaches of Regulations or Standards are of such significance that formal enforcement may be progressed immediately, when and where this is warranted.

## **Review**

This refers to the process which the Commission will follow whenever action relating to either escalation or enforcement has been taken. The Commission may increase inspection or other activities following escalation or enforcement action, to obtain the required assurances that improvements have been made and are sustained.

### **1.2 Scope**

This policy applies to all regulated activities.

### **1.3 Policy Statement**

The Commission is responsible for regulation and inspection, promotion of best practice and for the improvement of health and social care outcomes for the people of Jersey. In seeking to achieve this, the Commission is required to provide independent assurance about the quality, safety and effectiveness of health and social care services.

This requires the setting of high standards and the challenging of poor performance and practices.

Typically, the Commission will work to facilitate the cooperation of service providers in achieving these objectives. However, when necessary, the Commission is required in law to intervene to make sure that improvements take place. When escalation and enforcement become necessary, the Commission will adopt a stepped approach to make sure that service users are kept safe, and their needs are consistently met.

The Commission will act in a way which is fair, proportionate, and transparent when applying escalation and enforcement action.

#### **1.4 The Commission's Responsibilities**

The Commission is responsible for registering, inspecting, and encouraging improvement across a range of health and social care services delivered by statutory and independent providers. These services are provided in accordance with the Law, including the relevant Regulations and the Commission's Standards.

Regulated activities currently include care homes (children and adults), home care, adult day care services and children's social care services. The range of services subject to regulation and inspection will expand over time in accordance with amendments to the Law and Regulations.

In line with the Scheme of Delegation, the Board of the Commission (the Board) has responsibility for the approval and regular review of the policy.

#### **1.5 The Chief Inspector's Responsibilities**

The Chief Inspector has responsibility for ensuring that the Policy is applied within the legislative framework and in a consistent manner.

The Chief Inspector or Deputy Chief Inspector will inform the Board of any escalation or enforcement activities at the earliest available opportunity.

The Chief Inspector and Deputy Chief Inspector has operational responsibility for ensuring that the Policy and procedure is applied appropriately, and that escalation and enforcement activities are managed in accordance with this Policy.



The Chief Inspector or Deputy Chief Inspector will take the necessary steps to minimise risk of harm by informing the relevant organisations of escalation or enforcement action, as appropriate.

The Chief Inspector has overall responsibility for maintaining a record of all escalation and enforcement, direct allegations and/or disclosures. They are responsible for the dissemination of learning on behalf of the Commission.

The Chief Inspector will make sure that, where appropriate, issues are brought to the attention of the Board to identify trends.

The Chief Inspector has responsibility for ensuring that external reviewers working on behalf of the Commission also adhere to this policy.

## **1.6 Regulation Officers' Responsibilities**

Regulation officers are responsible for adhering to this policy and ensuring that any concerns, direct allegations and/or disclosures are raised with appropriate representatives of the regulated activity, such as the regulated person or responsible individual(s) and the registered manager.

Regulation officers will make a contemporaneous record of all contacts relating to inspection, escalation or enforcement.

Regulation officers are responsible for bringing any concerns to the attention of the Deputy Chief or Chief Inspector promptly.

Regulation officers have a role in meeting with the registered person / responsible individual(s) and/or the registered manager when escalation or enforcement action is being considered.

Regulation officers will normally be present during any meetings with registered person(s) / responsible individuals or registered managers whenever escalation or enforcement activity is being considered.

Regulation officers may be required to refer on to other statutory agencies such as the Jersey Safeguarding Partnership Board (JSPB), Children Young people, Education and Skills (CYPES), Health and Community Services (HCS) or the Police Service, when necessary and required.

## 1.7 Policy Review

This policy will be reviewed on a three yearly cycle or earlier at the Commission's discretion, should matters arise which need Board consideration.

## **SECTION 2**

### **2. Escalation**

Should any staff member within the Commission become aware of a matter which presents a real or potential risk of harm to a service user, they should inform the Chief Inspector (or in their absence, the relevant deputy), immediately.

The Commission will adopt a risk-based and graduated approach to intervention based upon an assessment of the seriousness of the impact which any particular concern has upon service users.

There will be instances where intervention must take place immediately, to protect service users from harm. However, there will also be instances where risk is assessed as being moderate or low, when a 'lighter touch' approach may be adopted. As such, risk can be measured and assessed on a continuum, whereby the relative probability and severity of harm will denote the appropriate response which the Commission should take.

#### **2.1 Risk Management**

The Commission will adopt a risk-based and graduated approach where there are concerns about the Regulations or Standards not being met. By employing risk management, the Commission will proactively and systematically protect the safety of people who use services.

The purpose in employing a risk management methodology is to avoid an approach which is purely reactive and to promote an alternative approach which identifies and understands risk within a broader contextual framework.

The response which the Commission will adopt will vary depending upon the facts and circumstances of each case.

The Chief Inspector, or their nominated deputy, will be involved in making decisions under this policy. Decision-making will be undertaken in partnership with other agencies where this is required (including statutory agencies with responsibility for safeguarding and child protection, social services, social security, GP's, the general hospital, and the police). All such decisions will be recorded and retained in the Commission's records.

The Commission will use intelligence gathered during inspections and through correspondence received from service users, staff members, family members and members of the public, in informing its decision-making relating to escalation and enforcement.

## **2.2 Concerns which fall outside of the scope of the Policy**

Some issues will fall outside the scope of this Policy, on the basis that they should be addressed routinely by the appropriate registered person(s) in accordance with their statutory responsibilities, or by professional regulatory bodies.

If such a concern is identified from the findings of an inspection, the registered person or manager should be informed of the nature of the matter and a record will be kept by the Commission.

## **2.3 Concerns which fall within the scope of the Policy**

Where the Commission has determined that any matters require escalation, the service provider will be notified accordingly and is required to provide assurances to the Commission of compliance with the relevant Regulations and Standards. This will usually involve a meeting with the service provider and the submission of a written action plan for the Commission's approval. Where there are matters that require an immediate response, a meeting may be held at short notice.

Where the service is directly managed by Health and Community Services (HCS) or Children, Young People, Education and Skills (CYPES), the Chief Inspector will also notify the Chief Officer of HCS or CYPES at the earliest opportunity and will advise the Assistant Chief Executive of Strategic Policy, Planning and Performance (SPPP) accordingly.

Letters of escalation may be copied to the Assistant Chief Executive and to other appropriate external organisations, for example, the JSPB, the Adult Safeguarding team, the Minister for Health and Social Services and/or the Minister for Children and Education, at the discretion of the Chief Inspector.

## **2.4 Individual Care Workers**

The Commission registers home care services provided by an individual in the same way that it registers other care services (which require a registered person and registered manager). In the case of individual home care workers, they are both the registered person and registered manager for regulatory purposes. The Commission does not carry out inspections of home care services provided by individual home care workers. Nevertheless, the Commission is required to hold individual home care workers to account for any failure to meet the Regulations or Standards.

The Commission will seek to operate a graduated approach to enforcement in relation to individual home care workers. In practice, the scope to impose discretionary conditions on registration, or to issue Improvement Notices are more difficult to achieve in respect of individual home care workers than in the case of a registered care agency. Consequently, there will be occasions when the Commission will need to respond more urgently to concerns relating to the practice of individual home care workers.

It may be appropriate and proportionate in certain circumstances to proceed directly to proposing the temporary suspension of registration of a registered manager (Article 19), or to the cancellation of registration of a registered person (Article 20), immediately and without resorting to other less stringent interventions.

## **2.5 The Role of Regulation Officers**

Regulation officers are required to apply professional judgement, based on evidence and current best practice guidance, to assess concerns and to determine the degree to which a risk presents an immediate or continuing threat to the safety of care receivers.

Regulation officers and any external reviewers involved with the Commission will discuss the nature and extent of the perceived risk with the Chief Inspector or Deputy Chief Inspector as part of the escalation process.

The initial assessment may need to be carried out quickly, even when all relevant facts are not immediately available.

The decision whether to initiate escalation or enforcement measures will be taken on the basis of the degree of risk and the likelihood of significant harm being experienced by service users.

A person who, without reasonable excuse, obstructs an inspection, or fails to comply with a requirement of an officer conducting an inspection, or a requirement to provide documentation or information to the Commission, is liable to prosecution and a fine of £10,000.

## **SECTION 3**

### **3. Review**

In respect of minor concerns which are identified through the process of an inspection, there will not normally be a requirement for review outside of the usual inspection schedule for regulated services.

However, the Commission has, at its discretion, the power to inspect services outside of the planned schedule and to request updates in relation to progress towards compliance with the Standards and Regulations.

#### **3.1 Review Meetings**

The purpose of a review meeting is to consider the steps taken by the regulated activity to address any breaches of Regulations or Standards, to reassess risk to service users and to determine whether any new or alternative measures and controls should be introduced.

A review meeting is a formal meeting which is called by the Chief Inspector or Deputy Chief Inspector. The officer will determine who will be present at a Review Meeting, but typically the registered person, the registered manager and the relevant regulation officer will be invited to attend.

Minutes of review meetings will be taken, and these will be provided to all attendees, for the purposes of both checking factual accuracy and ensuring that each attendee has a formal record. These minutes are normally confidential but may be available in response to

a request under the Freedom of Information (Jersey) Law 2011, notwithstanding that the Commission is not a scheduled public authority for the purposes of that Law.

In most cases it is envisaged that concerns will be addressed promptly, with the need for further review meetings diminishing as the regulated activity returns to full compliance with Regulations and Standards.

Each circumstance will be different and should be considered on its own merits.

The more significant a concern and the more pressing the associated risks, the more likely it will be that subsequent review meetings will need to be held.

The usual schedule of inspections will be resumed once the review process is concluded.

## **SECTION 4**

### **4. Enforcement**

Enforcement is a necessary component of regulation.

The Commission's purpose is to protect people who use health and social care services from harm, and to bring about improvement in the quality of services where there is evidence of a confirmed breach of the Regulations or Standards.

Responsibility for the quality of services lies with those who provide them.

Where there is evidence of systemic failings and where, despite escalation, services are not improving, or where people who use regulated activities are placed at risk of serious harm, the Commission will revert to the powers of enforcement under the Law. The Law empowers the Commission to intervene directly to make sure that services improve and that people who use regulated activities are protected from harm.

## **4.1 Graduated Approach to Enforcement**

In line with the principles set out above, a graduated approach is the preferred method, whereby the Commission will intervene no more than is necessary to address the identified issues and bring about the desired improvement/outcomes. Wherever possible the Commission will seek to bring about change by working with service providers in a way which is facilitative, rather than punitive.

The first step will usually be in the form of a documented conversation with the registered manager and responsible individual(s) to secure an early resolution.

Whilst adopting a graduated approach, there will be occasions when the Commission may determine that it is necessary to move directly to formal enforcement action, for example where identifiable harm has occurred to service users, or where there is proven criminal activity on the part of a regulated activity or any of its employees.

## **4.2 Improvement Plans**

This section should be read alongside the Inspection Policy.

Areas for improvement identified during an inspection are set out in inspection reports, where the identified actions and timescales for compliance are stated. These areas for improvement will be in relation to achieving compliance with the Regulation or the Standards.

There may be circumstances when providers are notified of breaches of the Regulations or Standards by letter, such as when an urgent matter cannot wait until the inspection report is issued, or in circumstances where a breach of Regulations has been identified outside of the inspection process.

Areas for improvement identified during the inspection process will be set out in the Improvement Plan, alongside the relevant Regulation or Standard.

The wording of Improvement Plans will follow the 'SMART' principles and the Commission will aim to make sure that they are:

- Specific
- Measurable
- Achievable
- Relevant
- Time framed.

Following an inspection, the Commission will require a service provider to complete and return the Improvement Plan, outlining the actions taken, or planned, to address the areas for improvement within the given timescale.

The response will be used by the Commission to assess the level of progress and to determine whether any follow-up regulatory activity is needed.

The Improvement Plan will be reviewed at each subsequent inspection and as appropriate, between inspections at the request of the Chief Inspector.

A regulation officer will assess the plan to determine whether the provider has identified suitable measures and controls to facilitate the necessary improvements.

Where the provider seeks to adjust the proposed timescales, the Chief Inspector has the authority to either agree or decline the request. This will depend upon the specific circumstances of the case.

Where the expected improvement has not been made, and poor or unsatisfactory outcomes for people experiencing care continue to be evidenced, consideration will be given to moving to formal enforcement. It is important to recognise that a failure to meet a requirement will, of itself, not necessarily lead to formal enforcement action.

In each case, consideration will be given to the circumstances and of the efforts being made by the registered person(s) to meet the required Standards or to comply with the Regulations.



### **4.3 Improvement Notices**

An Improvement Notice may be issued to the registered person by the Chief Inspector in line with the Regulation of Care (Standards and Requirements) (Jersey) Regulations 2018 (“the Regulations”).

An Improvement Notice:

- informs the registered person that the Regulations have been contravened.
- specifies a timeframe within which remedial action must be taken.
- explains the consequences of a failure to take such remedial action.

The Commission is required by Law to publish the fact that an Improvement Notice has been issued. This requirement may be achieved by the Improvement Notice being published on the Commission’s website.

It is an offence for a person to contravene the Regulations and fail, without reasonable excuse, to comply with an Improvement Notice for which the penalty is a maximum fine of £50,000.

Any person who contravenes the Regulations, resulting in a care receiver suffering, or being placed at risk of suffering significant harm, commits an offence and is liable to a fine of £50,000.

### **4.4 Enforcement Meetings**

An enforcement meeting may be convened when there is insufficient evidence of remedial measures being taken by the provider following the issuing of an Improvement Notice, or the Commission decides to move directly to enforcement.

An enforcement meeting is a formal meeting which will require an agenda and the taking of minutes which are to be distributed promptly to all participants upon completion. These minutes are normally confidential but may be available in response to a request under the Freedom of Information (Jersey) Law 2011, notwithstanding that the Commission is not a scheduled public authority for the purposes of that Law.

The purpose of this meeting is to identify alleged breaches of Regulations and/or Standards, to allow the Commission to outline the evidence underpinning its intentions and to provide an opportunity for the registered manager and/or the responsible individual to provide assurances of their actions and commitment to securing the necessary improvements.

The meeting will identify specific risks, the actions required of the provider to address risks and any immediate action which needs to be taken to safeguard care receivers. (Involvement of other agencies such as Child Protection or Adult Safeguarding teams must be considered at this meeting, as should any need to notify the police).

The provider must be made aware of any possible or likely formal action by the Commission which may take place following the conclusion of the enforcement meeting.

#### **4.5 Conditions of Registration**

The Law requires that mandatory conditions of registration are applied in respect of all providers of regulated activities. The Law also allows the Commission to apply additional discretionary conditions.

Discretionary conditions of registration set out the actions a provider or manager must take to ensure the needs of users of the regulated activity are met. For example, training requirements for the registered manager, or requirements to alter premises on which the regulated activity will be undertaken, or the numbers, qualifications and training of the persons delivering the regulated activity.

Mandatory and discretionary conditions may be varied, added to or removed. This can be done by the Commission of its own volition, or further to a written application from the registered person.

Before the Commission varies a condition of its own volition, the Commission must notify the registered person, in writing, of its proposal and the reasons for it. The person notified may make written representations no later than 14 days after the Commission's notice. The Commission must have regard to any representations received before deciding whether to proceed with its proposal.

The Commission must notify the registered person of a decision to vary any conditions, the date it takes effect and the right to appeal that decision.

Where the Commission is of the opinion that to delay the imposition or variation of a condition would present a serious risk to the life, health or well-being of an individual, the Commission may apply a condition with immediate effect. Notification by the Commission must provide the reasons for this action and why it was necessary to take immediate effect.

A failure to comply with conditions of registration without reasonable excuse, is an offence for which the maximum penalty is a fine of £50,000.

#### **4.6 Suspension and Cancellation of Registration**

Where a stepped approach to escalation has not succeeded in bringing about the necessary improvement, or where the seriousness of the circumstances determines that formal enforcement is necessary, the following options may be considered:

- Suspend the registration of a manager
- Cancel the registration of the registered manager or registered person(s)

Prior to taking enforcement action, the Commission may invite the registered manager and responsible individual(s) to an enforcement meeting.

Where there are breaches of the legislation, or conditions of registration, which lead to actual or potential unsatisfactory outcomes for people who use services, the Commission may ultimately suspend or cancel the registration of the registered manager.

#### **4.7 Article 19: Suspension of Registration of Manager**

The Commission has the power to suspend the registration of a manager in relation to a regulated activity for periods of up to 3 months.

This can happen in circumstances where the Commission has reason to suspect that:

- the manager is not a fit person; or
- any condition imposed upon the registration of the manager or provider in respect of a regulated activity has not been complied with; or
- the manager has not complied with any requirement relating to the regulated activity that they are required to comply with.

The Commission may decide to extend the period of suspension by up to a further 3 months on one or more occasions.

Before deciding to suspend the registration of a manager or to extend any such suspension, the Commission must notify both the manager and registered person(s) of the proposal and the reasons for it, in writing. The person notified may make representations, in writing, in response, no later than 14 days after the Commission's notice. The Commission must have regard to any representations received before deciding whether to proceed with its proposal. If the Commission decides to proceed as proposed, it must provide notice of the reasons for the decision; state when the decision takes effect; and explain the provider or manager's right to appeal.

#### **4.8 Article 20: Cancellation of Registration**

The Commission may cancel the registration of a registered person in relation to a regulated activity. This can happen in circumstances where the Commission has reason to believe that:

- the person has failed to comply with any mandatory or discretionary condition imposed upon their registration in relation to the activity; or
- the person is not a fit person; or
- the person has failed to comply with any requirement in the Regulations; or
- the person has been convicted of an offence under the Law or Regulations; or
- the person has failed to pay an annual fee.

Before deciding to cancel the registration of a registered person, the Commission must notify both the registered manager and registered person(s) of the proposal and the reasons for it, in writing. The person notified may make written representations no later than 14 days after the Commission's notice. The Commission must have regard to any representations received before deciding whether to proceed with its proposal. If the Commission decides to proceed as proposed, it must provide notice of the reasons for the decision; state when the decision takes effect; and explain the provider's right to appeal.

#### **4.9 Article 21: Immediate Cancellation of Registration**

The Commission may apply to the Bailiff for a provisional order for the immediate cancellation of the registration of a registered person in relation to a regulated activity.

The Bailiff may grant an application if he or she is satisfied that the grounds for cancellation under Article 20 are met and there is evidence that there will be serious risk to the life, health, or well-being of an individual if such cancellation does not take place immediately.

If a provisional order is made by the Bailiff, the matter will be referred to the Royal Court for consideration.

#### **4.10 Appeals**

An appeal may be made to the Royal Court in accordance with Article 44 of the Law. The Royal Court has the power to either confirm the decision of the Commission, or direct that it shall have no effect.

#### **4.11 Complaints**

A person has the right to make a complaint in line with the Commission's Complaints Policy (For the Investigation and Resolution of Complaints about the Jersey Care Commission). A complaint made under the Complaints Policy will not delay any enforcement notice.

#### **4.12 Notifying others of Enforcement Action / Communications.**

Notice of enforcement action will be given to other agencies as appropriate. This will be done in accordance with statutory reporting obligations set out in the Law and Regulations, and within any memoranda of understanding that exists between these organisations and the Commission, or otherwise as may be set out within Commission's policy.

Inspection reports are published on the Commission's website and will contain information on areas for improvement and any enforcement action taken.

The fact that an Improvement Notice has been issued will be published, and the Improvement Notice itself may be published.

The Commission has an expectation that registered person(s) will inform people who use services of any enforcement action taken. The Commission will make this information publicly accessible as set out above. In addition, the Commission may, where there is an actual or potential risk of significant harm to people who use services, inform people who are receiving care and/or their carers directly of any enforcement action being taken.

Where there is a possibility of a crime having been committed the Commission will liaise with relevant stakeholders as part of the decision-making process to determine the appropriate intervention.

In accordance with the Commission's Framework Agreement with the Government of Jersey, the Commission will notify the Assistant Chief Executive of SPPP of any enforcement action taken on a six-monthly basis.

## **APPENDIX 1**

### **List of Regulations and Standards underpinning the work of the Jersey Care Commission.**

- Nursing Homes (Jersey) Law 1994
- Nursing Homes (General Provisions) (Jersey) Order 1995
- Regulation of Care (Jersey) Law 2014
- Regulation of Care (Fees) (Jersey) Order 2018
- Regulation of Care (Regulated Activities) (Jersey) Regulations 2018
- Regulation of Care (Standards and Requirements) (Jersey) Regulations 2018
- Regulation of Care (Transfer of Functions) (Jersey) Regulations 2018
- Regulation of Care (Transitional and Transfer) (Jersey) Regulations 2018
- Jersey Care Commission Standards: Children and Young People's Social Care
- Jersey Care Commission Standards: Day Care Standards
- Jersey Care Commission Standards: Care Homes Standards
- Jersey Care Commission Standards: Home Care Standards