

What to do if you are dissatisfied with the service or treatment provided within social welfare and healthcare?

Good service and care are created in cooperation with you, your loved ones and professionals.

If you are dissatisfied, talk to a professional right away. If the matter is not resolved, you have the means to resolve the matter, without endangering the availability of your services or treatment.

1. Discussion

You can provide feedback and development suggestions about the service and care by discussing it in writing or through the unit's electronic feedback channels.

If you are dissatisfied with the service or treatment, immediately discuss the matter with a professional or their supervisor in the operational unit in question.

If this does not lead to a solution, you have the opportunity to make a written objection about the matter.

To resolve an issue, seek help and advice from a professional of the unit as well as from a social worker or patient ombudsperson.

Legislation:

- Act on the Status and Rights of Patients (785/1992)
- Act on the Status and Rights of Social Welfare Clients (812/2000)
- Health Care Act (1326/2010)
- Social Welfare Act (1301/2014)

2. Patient and social services ombudsperson *

You can use the services of the patient and social services ombudsperson free of charge when dealing with social services and healthcare issues.

The task of a patient and social services ombudsperson is to advise and guide you in matters related to rights. If necessary, you can receive advice from them, for example:

- when applying for a change to a decision about services
- when preparing a notice of injury regarding a patient, treatment received or material damage.

They do not take a stand on decisions made, and do not interpret, for example, document markings. It is important that you prepare for the meeting by asking to see the relevant documents and by writing down any questions you may have in advance.

You can find the contact information of the patient and social services ombudsperson on the websites of the wellbeing services county and private healthcare providers, as well as through the operational unit or below.

*The title was Social Welfare and Patient Ombudsman until 31 December 2023.

The Act on Patient and Social Services Ombudspersons (739/2023) entered into force on 1 January, 2024.

3. Objections and complaints

Objections

A written objection is made using a form found on the website of the wellbeing services county or private service provider or as a freeform objection.

The objection is addressed to the person in charge of the unit.

You will receive a written response to the objection within a reasonable time period.

An objection takes precedence over a complaint.

Reporting complaints

If you are not satisfied with the response you received regarding an objection, you can file an official complaint with the Regional State Administrative Agency (AVI) and, in special cases, with Valvira (the National Supervisory Authority for Welfare and Health).

The complaint is made using a form that can be found on AVI's website <https://avi.fi/en/services/individuals/enforcement-and-reporting-violations>

The complaint is sent via secure e-mail to the registry of the supervisory authority.

4. Take into consideration

If you are unable to take care of your case yourself, your legal representative, relative or other close person can initiate the case on your behalf.

AVI and Valvira can transfer a complaint to the operational unit to which the complaint applies.

The ruling of a complaint does not change the decision made by the authority, but the case can be referred for reassessment if an error occurred earlier.

As a rule, the authority does not deal with cases older than two years.

You cannot receive monetary compensation for a complaint.

You can file a complaint with the parliamentary ombudsperson or the chancellor of justice, if the authority or civil servant has not followed the law or fulfilled their obligations, or basic and human rights have not been fulfilled properly in the treatment.

Read more on the websites of AVI, Valvira as well as your wellbeing services county.

www.valvira.fi/web/en/healthcare/dissatisfaction_with_care

www.valvira.fi/sosiaalihuolto/sosiaalihuollon-valvonta/muistutus_tai_kantelu (in Finnish)