

**Add Logo**

## **Complaint Policy and Procedures**

Approved on [Date](#)

Updated on [Date](#)

### **Policy:**

[RSP] is legally obliged to receive and attempt to resolve complaints regarding matters which relate to the rights of children in our care or to whom we are providing services. Complaints about the rights of children in our care will be accepted from a child or group of children, a child's parent or guardian, a staff member, or any other person representing the child.

### **Procedures:**

#### **How to Make a Complaint**

1. Any person wishing to make a complaint concerning the rights of a child in our care or to whom we are providing services, may make the complaint verbally (e.g. in person or over the telephone) or in writing (using one of our complaint forms, by e-mail or otherwise).
2. Complaints can be made in private to a program staff of [RSP], or in a group setting to program staff (for instance, during a residents' meeting or plan of care meeting) or at any time to another person who will express the complaint to [RSP] on the child's behalf.
3. If the complainant is a child, the child will be provided with any immediate assistance to ensure that they are not at any risk of harm.
4. If the complaint is made verbally, [RSP] may request that the complaint also be made in writing. Assistance will be given to a child who wishes to make a complaint with finding a support person to help them write out their concerns. We will use our child-friendly forms as needed.
5. If a complaint is received in writing, we will contact the complainant to acknowledge receipt of the complaint.
6. Complaint forms are available on [RSP]'s website or upon request, or can be accessed on PACY's website. All complaint forms will be easily accessible and barrier-free in order to avoid any delay resulting from waiting to obtain forms to proceed with making a complaint.

**Receipt of a Complaint**

7. All complaints will be acknowledged in writing by [RSP] within 24 hours of receiving them.
8. A meeting will be offered to the complainant to explain our complaint process. We will provide the complainant with a brochure outlining our complaint process and explain the process to them. If the complainant is a child, we will explain the complaint process in a language suitable to their level of understanding.
9. At the meeting to discuss the complaint process, the [RSP] or one of its program staff will explain to the complainant:
  - our complaint process, including the right to be protected from retaliation;
  - the right to have their complaint reviewed by the Minister of Children and Youth Services, if they are not satisfied with the outcome of our complaint process;
  - the existence of PACY and its role, that they may ask PACY for assistance in making a complaint to us or to the Minister of Children and Youth Services, and the contact information for PACY; and
  - the availability of community supports which they may wish to involve for assistance (e.g. First Nations, Inuit or Métis communities, multi-cultural multi-religion (MCMR) representative).
10. [RSP] will provide contact information to the complainant for PACY, the Ontario Ombudsman, First Nations, Inuit or Métis representative or diversity representative (if any) and the Member of Provincial Parliament.
11. [RSP] will facilitate the child's contact with a [RSP] support staff, an advocate (e.g. PACY) or diversity representative to assist the child with continuing the complaint process.
12. [RSP] will notify the child's parent, guardian or other person having lawful custody of the child of the complaint and that the complaint process has been initiated.

**Review of the Complaint**

13. Within 24 hours, [RSP] will initiate an informal review of the complaint unless an informal review is not appropriate given the seriousness or systemic nature of the allegations.
14. The informal review will consist of meeting separately with the affected parties and discussing possible resolutions with them. [RSP] will review any stated concerns with the parties to identify and understand the details of the complaint and to discuss any possible resolution, problem-solving, negotiation or change in practice. In order for [RSP] to complete an informal

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review of the complaint, all persons involved must be willing to participate in these informal discussions with a view to resolving their issues.

15. After meeting with the persons involved, [RSP] will determine if there is a mutually agreed upon course of action that will improve the situation of concern. [RSP] may recommend and implement a resolution.
16. [RSP] will complete an informal review of a complaint and implement the resolution (if possible) within ten (10) business days of receipt of the complaint, or as otherwise may be agreed upon by the parties.

### Within Five (5) Business Days:

- A representative of [RSP] will meet with the parties to discuss the complaint and any possible resolution, negotiation or change in practice.
- [RSP] will arrange for an individual support person or diversity representative for any of the parties involved if requested.
- If possible, [RSP] will determine a mutually agreed upon course of action by any or all parties involved in order to attempt to improve the situation of concern.

### Within Ten (10) Business Days:

- [RSP] will initiate the implementation of the agreed upon resolution, if any.
- The outcome of the review will be shared with the parties involved.
- If the complaint is unresolved at this stage, [RSP] will review its formal investigation process, if the complaint will be investigated by [RSP]. Generally speaking, formal investigations will be a method of last resort for dealing with complaints. Please refer to our Investigation Policy and Procedures.
- [RSP] will reiterate to the complainant that they may request that their complaint be reviewed by the Minister for Children and Youth Services, or investigated by PACY. Contact information for PACY will be provided to the complainant.

### **Confidentiality**

17. Complaints received by [RSP] will be kept confidential and identifying information will not be disclosed, unless necessary to conduct a review or investigation into the complaint or as required by law.

### **Retaliation**

18. [RSP] prohibits retaliation (e.g. negative treatment, penalties or punishment) against any individual who reports a complaint or provides information regarding concerns about the rights of children in our care, including

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reprisals against the child at issue or anyone participating in an [RSP]-initiated investigation into a complaint.

19. Any staff member or foster parent found to be engaging in or allowing another child to engage in retaliation will be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination of their services.
20. [RSP]'s protection against retaliation will be explained to the complainant when a complaint is received by us.

### **Duty to Report**

21. If the complaint triggers a mandatory reporting obligation (e.g. duty to report or serious/enhanced serious occurrence report), [RSP], its staff member or foster parent will immediately follow the appropriate reporting procedures. [RSP]'s complaint process may not be appropriate to deal with the complaint in such circumstances.
22. If a review of a complaint cannot be completed because the nature of the allegations triggered a duty to report and a child protection agency will be investigating the matter, the complainant will be advised of this fact.

### **Documented Complaints**

23. A copy of the written complaint will be placed in the child's file.
24. [RSP] will begin the process documenting the complaint for the purposes of tracking complaints and complete an annual review of complaints.
25. If the complaint is resolved informally, the outcome will be documented in the Complaint Outcome Form, to be placed in the child's file.

References: [Complaint Handling Procedures Brochure, Form 2](#)  
["How Do I Tell Someone": Brochure for Children, Form 3](#)  
["I Have a Concern": Complaint Form for Children, Form 4](#)  
[Complaint Form \(Youth/Professional/Staff/Parent\), Form 5](#)  
[Complaint Tracking Form, Form 8](#)  
[Annual Review and Plan for Analysis of Complaints, Form 9](#)