
	Policy # SS3.012
Section: Supports and Services	Date Adopted: September 20, 2017
Subject: Service Complaints	Date Revised: January 2024 Date Reviewed: January 2024
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POLICY:

Community Living Trent Highlands (CLTH) will ensure that all people supported are aware of their right to express complaints about any organization service or support and to seek remedy. CLTH will take all complaints seriously. Where reasonable and necessary, and in accordance with the Regulations on Quality Assurance Measures and other relevant CLTH policy, the agency will investigate complaints and feedback that it receives.

Complaints may be received from:

- A person with a developmental disability who receives services and supports from CLTH
- A person acting on behalf of the person with a developmental disability who receives services and supports from CLTH, including an employee, and
- The general public

DEFINITIONS

Problem:

A situation, matter, or person that presents difficulty with regard to day-to-day living, but can be readily resolved and may be a one-time issue

Concern:



An ongoing issue which causes worry and may require help from someone else.

Complaint

An expression of dissatisfaction which may result from unresolved problems or concerns related to the services and/or supports that are provided by CLTH.

Feedback:

Feedback may be positive or negative and is related to the services and/or supports that are provided by CLTH. Feedback may be solicited or unsolicited and can be formal or informal.

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GUIDING PRINCIPLES

- Complaints are dealt with promptly and resolved as quickly as possible
- Complaints are confidential and protect the privacy of the person making the complaint
- The review of complaints is fair, impartial and respectful to all parties involved
- Complainants are advised of their options to escalate their complaint if they are dissatisfied with treatment or outcome
- Updates are provided to complainants during review processes
- Complainants are provided clear and understandable reasons as to how decisions about the complaint were made
- Complaints are used to assist in improving services, policies and procedures

PROCEDURES:

1. CLTH will, at all times, comply with reporting requirements set out in the Services and Supports to Promote the Social Inclusion of Persons with Developmental Disabilities Act, 2009 and its regulations. Where necessary, CLTH shall ensure that a complaint/feedback allegation is reported to the police should the complaint circumstances constitute a criminal offence or report a Serious Occurrence, based on the nature of the complaint/feedback.
2. Throughout the programs of CLTH, people supported will be encouraged to ask questions, offer feedback, express discontent and formally complain. This will be encouraged, dealt with in a professional manner and resolved where possible day to day in an informal and conversational manner.



Complaints may be received in many ways. They may be verbal or in writing and may be communicated via a community or employee or other stakeholder on behalf of the person.

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3. If, after all efforts to resolve the complaint informally by the recipient of the complaint, the person still does not feel that it has been resolved, the person supported will be supported to write down the complaint and submit it to the Manager of the program.



If the complaint or questions involves an abuse situation the "Managing a Situation of Abuse Adults" Practice will be followed. Any board member, employee, contracted consultant, placement student and volunteer of Community Living Trent Highlands will have the right to invoke the Governance Policy G7.5.1 Whistle Blower Process policy where there is an honest belief that a member of Community Living Trent Highlands is engaged in serious misconduct, wrongdoing or illegal activity that constitutes:

- (i) a criminal offence;
 - (ii) negligent and gross mismanagement;
 - (iii) serious, wilful and flagrant breach of applicable federal, provincial or municipal statues(s), regulation(s) and public policy directive(s);
 - (iv) serious breach of ethics or code of conduct;
 - (v) serious misrepresentation;
 - (vi) substantial and specific act or omission that creates a health and safety risk;
 - (vii) an act of fraud or misappropriation as defined in the Criminal Code of Canada;
 - (viii) questionable financial, accounting controls and audit practices;
 - (ix) serious breach of governance policies or principles, such as a conflict of interest influencing decision-making;
 - (x) alteration, destruction, forgery, manipulation of data or unauthorized access to information for wrong doing purposes; or
 - (xi) any other circumstances similar in nature to the above activities
4. The Manager, upon receiving a written complaint will have three (3) business days to respond to the person in a manner that promotes full comprehension, using a variety of communications. This will be carried out in a face-to-face meeting. The person supported may bring an advocate of their choice (parent, friend, advocate) if they wish. Consideration shall be given for the role and any

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responsibilities of persons who receive support from CLTH in the process at the complaint or feedback processes.

5. When the complaint is resolved the manager will document the complaint and its resolution and submit this document to the person supported, their Coordinator and appropriate Director.
6. If the complaint cannot be resolved at this level, the full report of the details and unsuccessful resolution measures will be submitted to the Director and/or Executive Director. The report will be reviewed, and the complaint will be investigated.
7. Within five working days of receipt the Director will meet with the person. At the discretion of the Director another management employee may be asked to be part of the investigation. The details will be discussed, and further resolution measures will be discussed in a manner that promotes full comprehension.
8. If the complaint is resolved at this level, the Director or Executive Director will document the resolution and send a copy to the person who submitted the complaint and the appropriate personal file.
9. If the complaint is not resolved within 30 days all documentation will be forwarded to the President of the Board of Directors. The board, at the next regular meeting, will appoint a committee who will convene a meeting of all parties involved in the complaint in a final attempt to resolve the issue. By the establishment of this committee and the inclusion, at the person's discretion, of any advocate they choose shall ensure that the review process is free of any coercion, or intimidation or bias, either before, during, or after the review.
10. After the investigation and deliberation, the committee shall make recommendations to the Board of Directors concerning the complaint at the next regular meeting of the Board of Directors.

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11. At any time, the person supported has the right to seek outside help to resolve their complaint, such as the Ministry of Children, Community and Social Services, Ontario Human Rights Commission, or the Ombudsman of Ontario.
12. The President will respond in writing to the person submitting the complaint regarding the decision and final plans of resolution within 30 days of the meeting where it was discussed. This decision will be considered final, any further disagreement will be treated as a new complaint and the steps will repeat.
13. Documentation of all steps and information will be kept in the central file of the Director and in the personal file of the person originally making the complaint.
14. Ongoing support, education and information will be offered throughout the process to enhance learning and comprehension for all parties involved. The complainant will be made aware that any disclosure is subject to confidentiality rules and the disclosure will be free from duress throughout the process.

Evaluation and Analysis

- 1- A report of complaint analysis will be completed annually, and a summation of outcomes will be used to inform policy, procedure and service delivery changes.

Cross reference:

- FA1.003 Financial Complaints***
G7.5 Complaint Process
G7.5.1 Complaint Process – Whistle Blower Process Policy