

## Complaints and Appeals from Individuals, Persons Acting on Behalf of the Individual or Members of the Public

### **Policy**

Family Services Windsor-Essex recognizes that feedback from clients and users of the agencies services and supports is a critical way of obtaining feedback about the agency, its programs, services, and staff. We welcome feedback and are committed to resolving any service issues to ensure that people receive the highest level of response from the agency.

### **Procedure**

If there are any complains about the services a person has received at Family Services Windsor-Essex, the following procedure is to be followed.

Complaints may be made by individuals directly receiving services and /or by a person acting on their behalf.

By submitting a complaint, a client is not at risk of having their services and supports negatively impacted or withdrawn because of submitting a complaint.

There is no time restriction on complaints and all complaints can be delivered by way of the following, but not limited to:

- 1) Verbally, in person or over the phone
- 2) Written; electronically or by mail
- 3) By an authorized third party acting on behalf of the client

All complaints will be documented in writing and tracked by the Access and Privacy Officer. An annual report on complaints will be provided to the Board of Directors.

The following procedures are used:

#### Step 1:

When a client states that he /she has a complaint about the services received, they must first make their concerns known to their counsellor/advocate /worker and attempt to resolve any issues. The concern may be made in any manner that allows the client to communicate with the agency staff (i.e. in writing, verbally, using an interpreter etc....) if the complaint cannot be resolved by the worker , the worker will refer the client to the Program Manager.

#### Step 2:

The client will put in writing, meet with, request a meeting with an interpreter or any means of communication that is easiest for the client with the Program Manager to address their complaints. The Program Manager will provide their outcome in a manner requested by the client (i.e. on audio tape, in braille, through an interpreter, in writing etc. ...) to the client within 15 business days. During the Complaint process the Program Manager will ensure that there are no biases or conflicts of interest influencing his /her decisions to serve and serve and protect the client. If the complaint cannot be resolved by Manager, the client will be referred to the Executive Director.

Step 3:

The client will put in writing, meet with, request a meeting with an interpreter or any means of communication that is easiest for the client or meet with the Executive Director to address their complaint. The Executive Director will submit their outcome to the client in a manner requested by the client (i.e. on audio tape, in braille, through an interpreter, in writing etc...) within 15 business days. During the Complaint process the Executive Director will ensure that there are no biases or conflicts of interest influencing his/her decisions to serve and protect the client. The Executive Director is the final level of appeal in this process.

The Complaint Procedure is outlined in the initial interview with staff, affiliates, and interns during the execution of the Service Agreement.