

<b>POLICY AND PROCEDURE</b>	
<b>Policy/Procedure</b>	<b>Complaint/Feedback and Appeal Process</b>
Original Creation Date	December 2004
Policy Approved by	Darlene McKenny (Chief Operations Officer)
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Policy Owner	Laurie Baker (Client Services Manager)
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## **Policy Statement**

### **Purpose:**

Pathways to Independence seeks to provide effective services and supports people with developmental challenges, acquired brain injury and those who may be dually-diagnosed. At Pathways to Independence every person has the right to a safe and life enhancing environment. Pathways is committed to providing a timely and thorough complaint and appeal process. A complaint/feedback process is an important part of providing quality support that is responsive to complainant's needs and that supports continuous improvement in service delivery.

### **Objectives:**

The objectives of this policy are to:

- Ensure the timely and equitable management of complaints and feedback
- Improve the quality of services and programs and
- Ensure complaints and feedback are managed consistent with the Services and Supports to Promote the Social Inclusion of Persons with Developmental Disabilities Act (2008) and/or report to the Ministry as a serious occurrence through the Ministry's serious occurrence reporting process

## **Scope**

This policy applies to all clients supported by Pathways to Independence, family members or the general public.

## **Definitions**

**Complaint:** Any issue raised formally by or on behalf of the person served regarding services and supports provided by Pathways and results in completion of Complaint Form (Appendix C).

**Feedback:** Provision of comment to Pathways about the services and supports it delivers. May be positive or negative (including complaints) and is related to the services and/or supports that are provided by Pathways. Feedback may be solicited or unsolicited and may be made formally or informally.

**Policy**

All clients supported by Pathways to Independence or others on behalf of those clients, have the right to lodge a complaint or provide feedback about services and supports without fear of interference, coercion, discrimination or reprisal. Every complaint and/or feedback will be treated with respect, privacy and confidentiality and in a format that is understandable to the client. Where applicable, a Substitute Decision Maker will be included.

Persons may submit a complaint/feedback in a manner that they are most comfortable. Complaints/feedback will be acknowledged in writing, verbally, through TTY or brail. Complaints/feedback can be presented to Pathways in person, over the phone, website or to the reception. Pathways will respond to all complaints regardless of how they are received.

Pathways will follow their Abuse policy for any complaints received that have the potential to be related to the abuse of a client.

All complaints and/or feedback will be responded to in a timely manner of 30 days or less.

The following are examples of criteria for determining a complaint or feedback;

- A person is found ineligible for service
- Services are excluded from their approved plan
- The quantity or frequency of service is not found to be adequate
- Services are terminated by the agency
- The quality of service is found to be lacking
- When there has been an alleged violation of the Client Bill Of Rights (see Appendix A)

**Procedure**

<b>Responsibility</b>	<b>Action</b>
Employee	<p>1. The employee will assist all complainants who have identified a complaint within 24 hours by supporting them to record the complaint using the Complaint Form (Appendix C).</p> <p>Should the complainants choose to not participate in the completion of the Complaint Form, the employee will complete the form, identifying the complaint/feedback.</p> <p>The employee immediately forwards the Complaint Form to his/her Manager.</p> <p>The "Speak Up! Stand Up For Your Rights" information sheet (Appendix B) may be used as a resource if needed.</p>
Client Services Manager	<p>1. Advises the Chief Operating Officer of the receipt of the complaint/feedback.</p>

2. Will acknowledge receipt of the complaint within seven (7) calendar days and provide a resolution within two (2) weeks.
3. If the complainant does not accept the resolution being offered, not justified the complaint and/or feedback will be forwarded to the Chief Operating Officer, for a further attempt at resolution.
4. If the complainant accepts the resolution, both parties sign off on the complaint (Appendix C)
5. Forwards the resolved record of complaint or feedback to the complainant and copies the Chief Operating Officer.

Chief Operating Officer

1. Will update the Chief Executive Officer on the status of the complaint or feedback.
2. If the complaint is not resolved with the Client Services Manager, it will be received by the Chief Operating Officer. The Chief Operating Officer will acknowledge receipt of the complaint within seven (7) calendar days and provide a resolution within two (2) weeks.
3. If the complainant does not accept the resolution being offered the complaint or feedback will be forwarded to the Chief Executive Officer for a further attempt at resolution.
4. If the complainant accepts the resolution, both parties sign off on the complaint (Appendix C).
5. Forwards the resolved record of complaint to the complainant and copies the Chief Executive Officer .
6. Ensures the tracking of complaint or feedback information as an indicator for risk management and Quality Assurance reporting.  
  
Ensures a Serious Occurrence report is filed with the Ministry of Community and Social Services where required.

Chief Executive Officer

1. If the complainant accepts the resolution, both parties sign off on the complaint (Appendix C).

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|                           | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>2. Forwards the resolved record of complaint or feedback to the complainant and copies the Residential Administrative Support for tracking and retention in a central admin file.</li> <li>3. Ensures the information forms part of an Annual Report to Pathways Board of Directors.</li> <li>4. Will track and maintain a central file of all client complaints and/or feedback.</li> <li>5. If the complaint is not resolved with the Chief Operating Manager, it will be received by the Chief Executive Officer. The Chief Executive Officer will acknowledge receipt of the complaint within seven (7) calendar days and provide a resolution within two (2) weeks.</li> <li>6. If the complainant is not satisfied with the resolution from the Chief Executive Officer they can request it be forwarded to the Board of Directors for a final review and resolution.</li> </ol> |
| Residential Admin Support | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Will track and maintain a complaint/feedback file</li> </ol>  |

Appendices

**Appendix A:** The Client "Bill of Rights"

**Appendix B:** "Speak Up! Stand Up For Your Rights" Information Sheet

**Appendix C:** Complaint Form

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