

**POLICY: FEEDBACK AND COMPLAINTS**

**APPROVED: October 23, 2001**

**REVISED: December 19, 2012**

**REVISED: February 5, 2024**

**REVISED: June 2, 2026 (Approved by Executive Director)**

**PURPOSE:**

The purpose of the policy is to provide a process to receive and address feedback and complaints about the services and supports provided by Access Community Services, Inc. ("Access").

Access is committed to excellence in serving all clients/staff and caregivers. Comments or concerns from individuals who come into our service and/or persons acting on their behalf, staff and the public, where applicable are both welcome and appreciated.

**DEFINITIONS:**

"Feedback" may be positive or negative (including complaints) and is related to the services and/or supports that are provided by Access.

"Complaint" is an expression of dissatisfaction related to the services and/or supports that are provided by Access.

**PROVISIONS:**

All clients receiving services from Access Community Services have rights. Refer to policy "Client Rights and Responsibilities" for an explanation of those rights.

- The Access feedback and complaints process as referred to in the "Client Rights and Responsibilities" will be explained in plain language to all clients coming into service and or someone acting on their behalf.
- Any person including the individual client, individuals acting on behalf of the client, staff and members of the public, who wishes to provide feedback or make a complaint about the way that Access provides services and supports to an individual with disabilities can voice these concerns, face to face verbally, in writing, by telephone or by e-mail.
- Access will provide a copy of its written policy on its Feedback and Complaints process to any person who requests it.
- Access shall ensure that for any feedback or complaint that is made by, on behalf of or about the services provided to any client does not place the client at risk of having their services and supports compromised or withdrawn consequently.
- No employee noted in the complaint shall participate in the investigation, resolution and notification/confirmation.
- Any person, whether client, staff, family or member of the public may submit feedback to the agency whether it is completing the Feedback and Complaints form or utilizing the website feedback option.
- The process of reviewing feedback and complaints shall be fair and open. Access will not tolerate any form of coercion, intimidation or bias to be expressed or exhibited during and after the review process.
- The *Serious Occurrences: Reporting and Responding Requirements* policy will apply to all complaints of a serious nature. In compliance with this policy, all required notifications will take place as stipulated, including the notification of a designated member of the board.
- The Executive Director shall annually review and analyze all reports of feedback and complaints to evaluate the effectiveness of the Access policies and procedures on an annual basis in order to promote continuous quality improvement to its services.
- Following the annual review of all reports of feedback and complaints and an evaluation of the effectiveness of the Access policies and procedures the Executive Director shall recommend where needed any changes to the existing policies to the Access Board of Directors for their review and approval.

- Upon request from the Ministry, the Executive Director shall share information, about the Access feedback/complaint process and any feedback or complaints that have been received in order to assist the Ministry with its risk assessment.
- All feedback and complaints will be reviewed and resolved as indicated below. Wherever possible Access will make reasonable efforts to address the matter and resolve to the mutual satisfaction of both the person who made the complaint and Access. No resolution, however, will be provided where the feedback or complaint is frivolous or vexatious.

**Procedure:**

How to express feedback or make a complaint

Any person including the individual client, individuals acting on behalf of the client, staff and members of the public who wishes to express a concern regarding service should first address the concern with the individual's staff. If you remain concerned following the response from the direct staff you may follow up with the supervisor.

Should the concern remain unresolved you may follow up by discussing the concern with the Program Manager, then where necessary the Executive Director. Unresolved concerns may be expressed in writing to the Board of Directors of Access Community Services Inc.

Any person may express feedback through the agency website by utilizing the Feedback button, if they choose to do so. The complaint will be received through email and the feedback and complaint process will be followed.

How Access will Process and Address the feedback or complaint

Should the feedback or a complaint, regarding a client's rights including their care and the services being provided to them, be expressed by a client, a client's family member or advocate, another employee of Access or a member of the general public then **this procedure shall be followed by Access staff:**

The clients support staff who is advised of the feedback or complaint shall attempt to determine if the feedback or complaint is of a minor or serious nature. Refer to policies "Incident Report" and "Serious Occurrences – Categories and Definitions" to clarify.

All feedback provided or complaints made to Access staff are to be recorded on the Feedback and Complaint Report Form (attached).

If the feedback has been provided through the agency website, the feedback and/or complaint will be printed and attached to the Feedback and Complaint Report Form.

## **Serious Feedback or Complaints**

1. Should the client's worker have **any** doubt about the seriousness of the feedback or complaint being expressed, the client's worker shall report the feedback or complaint to their Supervisor or to the Manager "On Call" immediately.
2. All feedback and complaints that are considered, or that have the potential to be considered serious, shall be reported to the worker's Supervisor or to the Manager "On Call" immediately.
3. The Supervisor or Manager "On Call" shall report all **serious feedback and complaints** to the Executive Director immediately. Refer to policy "Serious Occurrences – Reporting and Responding Requirements".
4. The Executive Director or designate shall report all **serious feedback and complaints** to the Ministry adhering to the timelines as outlined in the policy "Serious Occurrences – Reporting and Responding Requirements."
5. The Executive Director or designate shall report all **serious feedback and complaints** to the Board of Directors within 24 hours.
6. Should the feedback or complaint be of a serious nature, the client's worker shall provide the client with immediate (medical attention) where indicated. Refer to policy "Serious Occurrence – Reporting and Responding Requirements."
7. In keeping with the policy on abuse under the "***Services and Supports to Promote the Social Inclusion of Persons with Developmental Disabilities Act, 2008,***" Access shall ensure that any case of alleged, suspected or witnessed abuse that may constitute a criminal offence is reported to the police as per the policy on Reporting Abuse.
8. If the feedback or complaint is not related to supported individuals and is rather agency driven, the Feedback and Complaints process will be addressed by a senior manager.

## **Minor (Day-to-Day) Feedback and Complaints**

1. Should the feedback or complaint be of a minor, day-to-day concern, the support staff receiving the concern shall attempt to resolve the matter directly with the person providing the feedback or making the complaint.
2. Methods to resolve the feedback or the complaint available to the staff shall include direct discussion, discussion at case conferences, client meetings and ***Individual Support Plan*** meetings.
3. The Access staff shall complete a Feedback and Complaint Report and submit it to their Supervisor within 24 hours.
4. Upon receipt of the Feedback and Complaint Report, the Supervisor shall respond to the person providing the feedback or making the complaint within seven (seven) days and forward a copy of the Feedback and Complaint Report and a summary of their meeting to the Executive Director.
5. Should the person providing the feedback or making the complaint (minor feedback or complaint) not be satisfied with the resolution provided by the supported group living manager, the Executive Director shall review the documentation and address the concern within 7 (seven) days.
6. If the feedback or complaint is not related to supported individuals and is rather agency driven, the Feedback and Complaints process will be addressed by a senior manager.

**FEEDBACK AND COMPLAINT REPORT FORM**

NAME	LOCATION
DATE OF REPORT	SUPERVISOR

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF CONCERN

1.COMPLAINANT:

2. TYPE OF COMPLAINT:

3.INDIVIDUALS INVOLVED:

4. PERSONS REPORTED TO:

5. ACTIONS TAKEN:

SIGNATURE

SUPERVISOR SIGNATURE \_\_\_\_\_

DATE REPORT RECEIVED \_\_\_\_\_

(A written response must be prepared within seven days of receiving this report. Your response should be attached to the original and filed in the central files. Copies should be made and forwarded to the complainant, the Executive Director, and your own files.)