
6.10 Feedback & Complaints Procedure

POLICY

Catulpa acknowledges and encourages feedback from all relevant parties and the general public to shape and influence the services and supports provided as part of our quality assurance process.

The agency feedback and complaints process will adhere to the following principles: openness and flexibility, transparency, responsiveness, fairness and independence, learning and improvement.

Individuals who make complaints, criticisms and suggestions for improvement are assured a response that is, without reprisal and non-retaliatory. Confidentiality of the person making the report will be maintained to the extent possible, consistent with the need to investigate and report.

Complaints, criticisms, suggestions for improvement and inquiries, will be responded to in a timely manner.

NOTE: The following Definitions apply to this Policy:

Complaint: a statement articulating that a situation is unsatisfactory or unacceptable.

Feedback: advice, criticism, or inquiries/information related to the delivery of service.

PROCEDURES

1. Employees are trained and supported to respond sensitively to the comments and concerns raised and are able to distinguish those issues which would be better referred to a Manager/Supervisor or other Program.
2. Persons served will be informed of the Feedback Procedure (for complaints and compliments) at the start of active service as part of the Service Delivery Checklist. The general public will be made aware of the ability to make a complaint through our website and/or other social media.
3. Persons served will also be informed of their privacy rights and the ability to file complaint with the Information and Privacy Commission (IPC) regarding concerns with how the agency protects, collects, uses and/or discloses their personal information.

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4. Catulpa's complaints policy and the invitation to provide feedback will be posted on the agency website so as to be visible and accessible to all relevant parties.
 5. Individuals who provide feedback or submit a complaint will continue to receive quality service from the agency. Service will not be negatively impacted or withdrawn as a consequence of a complaint.
 6. Complaints/Feedback will be welcomed and encouraged in a variety of formats including but not limited to, email, verbal, web link, written and visual aids. Invitation to provide feedback will also be highlighted on our Agency website and social media channels for Catulpa and CAPC. As this information is received, the process for responding and resolving concerns will follow the steps outlined in this policy and procedure.
 7. From time to time, persons served may share feedback that they indicate is not an official complaint. Staff are expected to document this information regardless as a way for the agency to continue to review and evaluate our practices for improvements. The persons served will be informed of this practice and may remain anonymous in the documentation if they prefer.
 8. Catulpa Community Support Services staff will communicate in ways that take into account the unique needs of individuals making the complaint.
 9. Persons served will be encouraged to discuss the complaint directly with the staff member involved.
 10. For complaints received indirectly (non-specific as to program/service, e.g. via agency surveys) the Manager of Quality Assurance will contact the individual to discuss the feedback and then will forward the issue to the appropriate Supervisor.
 11. Complaints that are not resolved by the staff member and person served are forwarded to the Program Supervisor, who discusses the issue further with the person served. The concern will be forwarded to Catulpa's Executive Director.
 12. The agency will not attempt to resolve complaints determined to be frivolous or vexatious in nature. A complaint is considered frivolous or vexatious if it is
 - a. part of a pattern of conduct that:
 - b. amounts to an abuse of the right of access to information
 - c. interferes with the operations of the organization
 - d. made in bad faith or
 - e. made for a purpose other than to improve services received*

*taken in part from Access Fact Sheet: Frivolous and Vexatious Requests (Aug 2017); Information and Privacy Commission of Ontario

13. If a complaint is determined to be frivolous or vexatious, the person served will be notified by the Privacy officer and the reasons for this decision will be outlined. The person served will also be informed of their right to appeal this decision via contact with Executive Director

and the IPC when applicable.

14. Feedback and complaints received from any source will be respected and there will be a non-retaliatory approach in the response to these. Considered 'Whistle-Blowing Protection': this protection articulates and ensures that Catulpa and the staff will not retaliate against any person, whether by action or omission, or threaten to do so because anything has been reported regarding abuse and/or neglect. For greater certainty, a whistle-blower shall not be dismissed, suspended, demoted, disciplined, harassed, interfered with or otherwise disadvantaged as a result of having disclosed such information.
15. All feedback will be processed as follows:
 - a. All complaints will be documented on the Complaint Form.
 - b. All documented complaints will be reviewed and a response to the complainant will occur within 5 business days of receipt by the Employee.
 - c. Should a resolution not be satisfactory, the Employee's Supervisor will become involved to assist in determining a resolution. A response, acknowledging receipt of the complaint will be provided within 5 business days by the Supervisor. The Supervisor will gather information required to formulate a response and provide the complainant with a response within 30 days.
 - d. Should further follow up be required, the Executive Director will engage in the determination of a resolution. The Executive Director will respond to the complainant within 5 business days, acknowledging receipt of the complaint. The Executive Director will gather information required to formulate a response within 30 days. More complex complaints may take an increased timeframe to address. Should this be necessary, the complainant will be informed.
 - e. All resolutions are to be documented by the employee who facilitates a response in the "Complaints Resolution" portion of the Complaint Form. The form is forwarded to the Senior Executive Assistant for central storage within 5 business days.
 - f. Feedback in any other form will be documented by the receiver and forwarded to the Senior Executive Assistant for central storage within 5 business days.
16. Employees and Managers will follow the Conflict-of-Interest Policy and Procedure when dealing with feedback and if a conflict situation exists, will move the resolution of the complaint to the next level as per the Conflict of Interest Policy and Procedure #2.5.
17. All employees have the right to be informed when a concern/complaint involving them has been made and the right and responsibility to be party to its resolution.

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18. Agency Policies and Procedures related to the concern/complaint will be provided upon request.
 19. Should the complaint indicate a breach of privacy information; the resolution process will follow the process outlined in the Catulpa Personal Health Information Statement for Persons Served.
 20. Should the complaint involve a report of abuse, staff will follow the appropriate agency Policy and Procedure; for suspicions about the safety or well-being of a child/youth, the complainant must immediately call Child Protection Services in the local area. The staff member who receives this information must also call Child Protection Services. For reports by a person with a developmental disability that they have been abused, the staff member will report the abuse immediately to police. (See Child/Youth Abuse Report Policy and Procedure and Abuse Prevention and Reporting Policy and Procedure- APSW Program).
 21. Should the complaint involve a report of abuse or suspected abuse of a person by staff, the Person Served Abuse Policy and Procedure will be followed. This information will be immediately forwarded to the Executive Director who will initiate an investigation that is conducted by a third party (e.g. police/child protection) where appropriate.
 22. Complaints will be reported to the Ministry as per Serious Occurrence Reporting Procedures.
 23. Depending on the nature of the complaint, and consistent with Quality Assurance Measures (SIPDDA), a report may also be made to police.

INDICATORS

1. Feedback and complaints are encouraged via a variety of media including email, verbal, written, visual aids, website and social media channels.
2. All employees have been trained and supported to address complaints. Appropriately trained employees recognized the value of the feedback process and, as a result acknowledged complaints as a source of learning.
3. All resolutions were documented in the “Complaints Resolution” portion of the Feedback Form by the person who achieved resolution.
4. All complaints were addressed in an objective and fair manner within the timeframes outlined, without negative repercussions or negative impact to the person(s).
5. Any complaints which related to the protection, collection, use and/or disclosure of personal information adhered to requirements by PHIPA and the IPC.
6. All complaints that involved reported or suspected abuse followed processes outlined in the appropriate agency Policy and Procedure: Child/Youth Abuse Reporting, Abuse Prevention

and Reporting for APSW; Person Served Abuse; Serious Occurrence and Incident Reporting.

7. Employees who were named in the complaint were involved in the resolution process.
8. . The majority of complaints were addressed to the satisfaction of the person(s).
9. Any complaints deemed frivolous or vexatious were documented. Notification of the person served, including reasons for the decision and appeal process were also documented.
10. On a quarterly basis, a summary of non-identifying information was reviewed from feedback received to help inform service development. As well, a semi-annual summary of feedback was reviewed by the Board of Directors.
11. The service delivery checklist stated that the Complaints Procedure was reviewed with the person served.

Next Review	November 2024
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Date	Action (Approval, Revision, Review)	Signature
November 2023	Revision	<i>Karen Christwood</i>
Jan & Oct 2022	Revision	<i>Karen Christwood</i>
June and Nov 2021	Revision	<i>Karen Christwood</i>
April & June 2020	Revision	<i>Karen Christwood</i>
Jan, Mar & Dec 2019	Review	<i>Karen Christwood</i>
Jan & May 2018	Review	<i>Karen Christwood</i>
June 2014	Revision	<i>Karen Christwood</i>