

CLIENT COMPLAINT PROCESS

Policy Name	Client Complaint Process
Policy Type	General Agency Service Protocols
Policy Number	2.11
Revision Date Creation Date	June 2006, June 2011

POLICY

Catholic Family Services of Peel-Dufferin is a counselling agency that takes pride in the skill of its staff and in the services it provides to the community. We do believe in empowering our clients. Usually that is a process that we can celebrate along with our clients; at other times, our clients may feel that one of our staff, or one of our policies, have not served them properly and they wish to deal with the situation.

We encourage the expression of client's concerns and complaints while understanding the fundamental difficulties that all human beings have in understanding one another. In order to facilitate a fair and effective means of reconciling different perceptions of the client-counsellor or client-caseworker relationship, procedures to pursue client concerns and complaints are outlined below.

Clients are advised of the complaint process through the provision of the agency's Welcome Document at their first counselling session. In addition to the Welcome Document, EAP clients receive a Family Service Employee Assistance Program Information Sheet which further emphasizes the client's right to a complaint process.

PROCEDURES

Clients are encouraged to raise their concerns directly with their counsellor or caseworker. It is expected that most issues can be resolved at this level.

If a client and a counsellor/caseworker have attempted to problem solve and have been unable to reach a satisfying resolution, either the client or the counsellor/caseworker may request the involvement of their respective supervisor in the clarification and/or problem solving process. The client, the counsellor/caseworker and the supervisor will meet together to resolve the issue.

Under normal circumstances, the client can expect to meet with the counsellor/caseworker and their supervisor within ten (10) working days after the request for a meeting has been made. If that is not possible then the supervisor will respond in writing to the client indicating the suggested time(s) to meet, and provide an explanation for the delay.

The supervisor may communicate directly with the client without the presence of the worker if that is mutually agreed to by both worker and supervisor. In a situation where the client refuses to speak to the counsellor/caseworker, or the counsellor/caseworker refuses to speak to the client, the supervisor retains the right to speak directly to the client.

It is expected that most issues can be resolved at this point. If that is not the case, then the client, counsellor/caseworker or supervisor can request the involvement of the Director of Clinical Programs.

The Director of Clinical Programs will meet with the client, the supervisor and the counsellor within fifteen (15) working days of the request to join the clarification and/or problem solving process. If that is not possible, the Director of Clinical Programs will respond in writing to all parties suggesting a time to meet and at the same time provide an explanation for the delay.

If the issue is not resolved at this point, then the client, the counsellor/caseworker, the supervisor or the Director of Clinical Programs can request the involvement of the Executive Director. The Executive Director will meet with the client, the counsellor/caseworker, the supervisor and the Director of Clinical Programs within fifteen (15) working days of the request for involvement in the problem solving process. If that is not possible, the Executive Director will write a letter to all parties suggesting a time to meet and at the same time provide an explanation for the delay.

If the issue remains unresolved, a request can be made to meet with representatives of the Board within twenty-five (25) working days. Should circumstances prevent a meeting within 25 business days, the Board will write a letter to all parties providing an explanation for the delay and suggest a date for the meeting. The Board representative will help to facilitate a consensus, but if a consensus is not reached, the Board representative will decide what course of action is required. This decision will be made within twenty (20) business days of the meeting and will be communicated in writing to all parties. The Board's decision will be the agency's final decision.

EAP Client Complaints

All EAP client complaints must be documented, in writing, using the Family Service Employee Assistance (FSEAP) Customer Concern Form and forwarded immediately to FSEAP for resolution. The Master Contract Holder will be advised of the complaint as per Customer Concern Form. A copy of the file for purpose of the complaint resolution will be provided upon request of the Master Contract Holder and permission of client.