



QA: Reporting Policies and Guidelines	
Policy #: 6.1	
Policy Name: Feedback Complaints And Appeal Process	
Date Approved: April 22, 2023	Executive Director: Kathy Paynter

SCOPE

All people who access supports from Community Living North Bay and their families, employees advocating on a person’s behalf, community members and board members.

POLICY STATEMENT

Community Living North Bay encourages both negative and positive feedback and is committed to being responsive to complaints and concerns. By doing so, the organization not only provides an avenue for complaints and appeals but has the opportunity to reflect, learn and make revisions, to ensure that quality services are provided.

Community Living North Bay believes that all employees are responsible to assist anyone who would like to provide feedback, make a complaint or to appeal a decision. When an employee receives feedback or a complaint they are responsible to support the person with the complaint and follow the process regardless of the level of involvement with the person.

All people who access supports from the organization, persons acting on their behalf or community members may make a complaint or provide feedback directly to an employee or by calling the hotline telephone number at 476-3288 ext. 2250, or in writing to: Community Living North Bay, Attn: Director – Communications & Marketing or designate, 741 Wallace Road, North Bay, Ontario, P1A 0E6 or email to info@communitylivingnorthbay.org.

“Complaints are quality control measures that provide an opportunity for improvement.”

REFERENCES

Legislation: Services and Supports to Promote the Social Inclusion of Persons with Developmental Disabilities Act, 2008 Regulation 299/10
French Language Services Act (FLSA)



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DEFINITIONS

Compliment / Positive Feedback:

Any written or verbal comment or gesture(s) that commend an individual or the organization on the service or care that is provided. Positive feedback can be given in various forms. Someone could be praising the organization, offering suggestions or making recommendations. Examples could be someone complimenting the organization on their newsletter, suggesting new activities for the calendar of events, or recommending a change to a service.

Complaint / Negative Feedback:

Any verbal or written expression of dissatisfaction with the care or service provided by an individual, setting, or the organization. Negative feedback can be given in various forms. Negative feedback could be someone disagreeing with an article in the newsletter, someone indicating that they would like to see more activities for people, or someone not liking changes to a service but do not want to file a formal complaint.

Minor Complaint

A more distinct criticism than a concern with a care or service issue where resolution is straightforward consisting of an explanation, clarification, brief review or an apology. The issue can be resolved usually by the first point in contact, front-line staff. Usually received verbally but does not exclude written documentation.

Intermediate Complaint

When the complaint with a care or service issue is more serious in nature, has escalated beyond the first point in contact, requires investigation by a Director, Manager, or Supervisor or clearly do not meet the definition of minor complaint, then it will be categorized as intermediate.

Major Complaint

When the complaint regarding a care or service issues is most serious in nature (i.e. critical nature, medical error, violation of law, abuse, mistreatment), requires more intervention than described in an intermediate complaint and requires or has been escalated to the Executive Director, it will be categorized as a major complaint. Major complaints are reported as Serious Occurrences (Policy 6.2) and may require reporting to the police or local authorities.

Vexatious Complaint

A client, family member, and/or staff person who consistently displays a pattern of unreasonable or unwarranted requests despite a full review and explanation of their original complaint.

First Point of Contact

The Executive Director, Director, Manager who first receives the complaint from the client, family, or staff



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Primary Contact

The management representative or delegate who is responsible for any follow up, reviewing or investigating a complaint will be the primary contact.

Reviewer

The management representative or delegate who reviews the initial compliment or complaint in the AIMS database, categories the complaint and follows the procedure for each.

Event Reporting System

AIMS database

Procedure for Positive/Negative Feedback:

When any employee receives positive or negative feedback, they must make a service activity entry in the AIMS database under the subject “feedback” outlining the information they received. The Director-Communications & Marketing or designate run a monthly report to provide details of the positive and negative feedback to the Senior Team.

Compliments Procedure

The first point of contact will log the compliment into the AIMS database and will notify the most appropriate management representative of the compliment in their area.

The management representative will notify the staff member or service area named in the complement by letter, email, in person or by reporting during a staff meeting. They will then record the compliment in the AIMS database.

Receiving, Investigating, and Severity Levels of Complaints

In keeping with Community Living North Bay best practices, the recipient or first point of contact is encouraged to assist in resolving complaints and issues at the service level.

Step 1:

Once a complaint has been brought forward, the first point of contact should enter the complaint in the AIMS database in the “Complaints/Allegations” module found in the menu on the home page.

Step 2:

The management representative will review the complaint and determine the severity level; minor, intermediate, or major. If the complaint is categorized as major and is a violation of the law, the police must be notified and a Serious Occurrence must be completed. If the complaint was resolved by the first point of contact, the complaint should be categorized as minor and can be noted resolved. **As a quality assurance component, management staff will regularly review**



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complaints that are noted resolved prior to closing to ensure accuracy, completeness of resolution, and trending.

During the initial review and communication with the complainant, it may be necessary to seek clarification before categorizing the complaint as providing an opportunity to further explain their concerns may result in resolution, eliminating unnecessary use of resources for investigation.

If the unresolved complaint requires further review or investigation and is categorized as intermediate or major, the reviewer will advise the complainant of the process, timelines for investigation, and who they may contact should they wish additional support or information. The following guidelines should be used:

- Contact with the complainant within 3 business days of the complaint and note update in the complaint file.
- Complete any additional reviews and interviews within 21 days of the complaint and document at each step with the complaint file.
- Complete all updates and input any reports and notes (third party reports, typed, copied, scanned) in the complaint file within 30 days.
- Contact complainant to discuss review/investigation (in person, phone, and/or by letter) within 45 days and document outcome in the complaint file.
- Close complaint file within 60 days.

If the reviewer is aware that the complaint is part of a police investigation, the matter should be referred to the Executive Director and legal counsel.

If the complaint was initiated by the Executive Directors office and is being followed by the manager, the Executive Director’s office will be kept aware of progress through the process.

Step 3:

If the issue is not resolved within 30 days due to reasons such as availability of people attending a meeting or information is required from an outside source, the Director – Communications & Marketing or designate will extend the timeframe and document the reason in the complaint form and review the situation with the Executive Director

Step 4:

If the person remains dissatisfied with the resolution at the conclusion of the review and/or investigation, the complainant will be directed to the Executive Director. The Executive Director may request an external third-party to review the process. The person who filed the complaint will be notified by the Executive Director and given confirmation in writing as to who will complete the review and when they will be contacted.



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Community Living North Bay will follow up to ensure resolution to the complaint/appeal occurs in a timely manner. Community Living North Bay will also monitor emails and calls from the Hotline and will direct those complaints or appeals to the appropriate Program Manager or appropriate designate and begin the process in the AIMS database. Community Living North Bay will endeavor to facilitate a resolution that satisfies the complaint. It is recognized that not all complaints will be resolved to the complainant's satisfaction.

The information collected will assist with the following:

- a) Recognition of Rights Restrictions
- b) Recognition of Fair Treatment Issues
- c) Recognition of Abuse, Neglect, Mistreatment and Exploitation
- d) Delivery of French Language Services Act
- e) Systemic Issues
- f) Trending
- g) Monitoring Reports
- h) Other Aggregate Data

In order to promote continuous quality improvement, Community Living North Bay will conduct an annual review and analysis of the complaints and feedback received to evaluate the effectiveness of our policies and procedures. The role and responsibilities of the board of directors will be to review this monitoring report and provide feedback to the Executive Director.

Complainants have the right to be free from retaliation or barriers to service and are assured that the act of complaining will not result in either. Complainants have the right to be free from any coercion, intimidation or bias, either before, during, or after the review. The organization bears the responsibility to ensure this.

Complainants have the right to have all complaints taken seriously and to have review and investigation of all such matters. It is the responsibility of the organization to ensure this.

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Conflicts of Interest:

If at any time there is a conflict of interest between the Community Living North Bay employees and or board member they will remove themselves from all stages of the dispute resolution process.

Staff should not be investigating complaints made against themselves. Management staff should be discussing who is best positioned to investigate service complaints in their respective areas. There may be occasions where a management representative from another service area may be better suited to conduct the review/investigation. This decision should be communicated to the Executive Director.

The Executive Director will be responsible to receive and review any compliments and complaints regarding the organization’s Senior Team.

The Board of Directors will be responsible to receive and review any compliments and complaints regarding the organization’s Executive Director

Non-Compliance of the Policy

Any breach of this policy or the components contained herein will be treated as misconduct. Misconduct will be reviewed and may result in disciplinary action including dismissal from employment.



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Review History

Policy Number/ Form Number	Name	Date	Reason for Changes
Complaint – 2.01.1	Complaint and Appeal	09-2009	Revised
6.1	Feedback, Complaints and Appeal Process	11-2012	Updated to reflect legislation and new numbering system
6.1	Feedback, Complaints and Appeal Process	05-2013	Updated to include the quote under the policy statement
6.1	Feedback, Complaints and Appeal Process	10-2013	Updated page 3 of 6 to meet legislation and the compliance review
6.1	Feedback, Complaints and Appeal Process	12-2015	Updated to meet French Language Services legislation.
6.1	Feedback, Complaints and Appeal Process	10-2016	Updated to include definition of internal or external complaint.
6.1	Feedback, Complaints and Appeal Process	05-2018	Update address, phone numbers and job titles.
6.1	Feedback, Complaints and Appeal Process	07-2018	Review before Surge upload.
6.1	Feedback, Complaints and Appeal Process	07-2020	Updates for job titles
6.1	Feedback, Complaints and Appeal Process	11-2020	Updates to definitions including degrees of complaints, steps to the receiving, investigating and severity levels of complaints.
6.1	Feedback, Complaints and Appeal Process	03-2023	Includes reporting major complaints as serious occurrences and notifying police/local authorities as required by Ontario Regulation 299/10 regarding quality assurance measures made under the Services and Supports to Promote the Social Inclusion of Persons with Developmental Disabilities Act, 2008
6.1	Feedback, Complaints and Appeal Process	04-2023	Updated job titles.



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