

Agency Service Coordination Manual

2.4 Formal Complaints

Background

Individuals and their support networks are encouraged to discuss all concerns with the agency providing case management. Concerns will be addressed by agency staff, and may be escalated to the Community Living disABILITY Services (CLDS) program where a resolution cannot be made. This process is described in the Conflict Resolution section of this manual. In some situations, individuals and/or members of their support network may wish to file a formal complaint to the CLDS program.

This procedure describes the criteria for which a formal complaint may be made, and how complaints will be addressed.

Process

Filing a Complaint

- Formal complaints may be filed regarding the following:
 - situations where an individual's rights were not respected;
 - decisions about an individual's service plan;
 - the quality of services provided by the supporting agency;
 - how an individual was treated by the supporting agency;
 - how personal information was handled; and/or
 - concerns related to CLDS policies and procedures.
- Concerns that do not meet the above criteria should be discussed with the agency providing case management where attempts at conflict resolution will be made.
- Individuals may file a complaint by email, mail or fax, as described on the Complaints Form. While use of the form optional, complaints should include as much information as possible in order for CLDS staff to act appropriately.
- Complaints may be filed by the individual receiving services, or by another person on the individual's behalf.
- **If a person makes a complaint on an individual's behalf, consent from the individual and/or their Substitute Decision Maker (SDM) is required. While CLDS staff may contact the person making the complaint to acknowledge receipt of the complaint, personal information will not be discussed until CLDS receives consent from the individual and/or their SDM.**

Review and Resolution of a Complaint

- All complaints will be initially reviewed and triaged by the Service and Support Navigator (SSN). The SSN will address the complaint and/or may forward the complaint to appropriate department staff for further action.
- The SSN will contact the individual to obtain consent to discuss the complaint and/or personal information related to the complaint with a third party.
- The SSN will schedule a time to discuss the complaint with the individual and/or appropriate members of the support network in order to come to a resolution. The agency designate may or may not be involved in these discussions at the discretion of those involved. Subsequent meetings may be scheduled to include the agency designate.
- The SSN will document an action plan with any steps required to come to a solution, including who is responsible for those actions and a timeline for follow-up. The written action plan will be shared with those involved.
 - In the event the agency designate was not involved, the SSN, with consent, will send a summary of the discussion and the action plan to the agency designate.
- The SSN will document complaints involving a participant in an inFACT case note, including a summary of the discussion and an action plan. The agency designate will store documentation on the individual's hardcopy file.
 - Complaints that don't involve a participant may be documented and stored electronically in the agency folder in the W drive.
- Agreed upon actions will be implemented by those involved. If further planning is required to carry out these actions, the agency designate will initiate planning as described in the Person-Centred Planning section of this manual.
- The SSN will follow-up with the individual, relevant members of the support network and/or the agency designate as per the timeline outlined in the action plan.
 - The SSN will document participant-related follow-up in an inFACT case note.
 - Follow-up for complaints that don't involve a participant will be documented and stored electronically in the agency folder in the w drive.

Standards

- The SSN will contact the person making the complaint within three business days of receiving the complaint.
- **If a person makes a complaint on an individual's behalf, consent from the individual and/ or their SDM is required. While CLDS staff may contact the person making the complaint to acknowledge receipt of the complaint, personal information will not be discussed until CLDS receives consent from the individual and/or their SDM.**
- In the event a complaint is received that does not meet the above criteria, the SSN will direct the person making the complaint to discuss their concerns with the agency designate. In rare circumstances and on a case-by-case basis, the SSN may determine that the complaint requires attention from department staff and will address concerns accordingly.
- The SSN will schedule a mutually agreed upon time to discuss the concern within two weeks of receiving the complaint.
- Wherever possible and/or appropriate, discussions regarding the complaint will include the individual.
- All documentation, maintenance and storage of complaints and follow-up will be in accordance with CSD Recording Standards.