


ST. LEONARD'S COMMUNITY SERVICES LONDON & REGION
POLICY AND PROCEDURE MANUAL

 St. Leonard's community services LONDON & REGION	Section: Organizational Planning and Performance	Policy: 2.08
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	Approved By SLCS Executive Director	Last Revision Date February 11, 2025

PREAMBLE

St. Leonard's Community Services (SLCS) encourages individuals to come forward with information on illegal practices, professional misconduct/incompetence and violations of organizational policies, with the understanding that the Agency will not retaliate against and will protect the confidentiality of individuals who make good-faith reports except where required by law.

The complaint process at SLCS is an important part of providing quality support that is responsive and meets the needs of program participants from SLCS. The process also supports continuous quality improvement in service delivery. Information received through the complaint/feedback process can assist SLCS to take steps to better support participants.

POLICY

SLCS is committed to providing services that are transparent, accountable and respectful of a participant's dignity and rights and in conducting its relations with families and members of the public with integrity, courtesy and professionalism.

Integral to this commitment is the availability of a formal process for program participants, their families, advocates, as well as, members of the general public to receive and address a complaint or other feedback regarding SLCS' services. This policy will ensure that all complaints are resolved quickly and efficiently. The review of complaints shall be fair, impartial and respectful to all parties. The information gained from complaints shall be used to inform and improve policies, procedures and service delivery.


Any complaint that has the potential to place SLCS at elevated risk (i.e. financial, legal, reputational, media attention) shall be reported to the Board of Directors at the time of the complaint.

Definitions

"Complaint" is an expression of dissatisfaction related to the services and/or supports provided by SLCS. A complaint may be related to illegal practices, professional misconduct/incompetence and violations of organizational policies. A complaint may be expressed by program participants, an individual acting on their behalf, or by members of the general public. A complaint may be made formally, such as a letter, or informally, such as a verbal complaint expressed by an employee. A complaint does not include feedback on matters unrelated to services and/or supports provided by SLCS.

"Feedback" may be positive or negative and is related to the services and/or supports provided by SLCS. Feedback may be solicited (such as comments collected through a satisfaction survey)

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or unsolicited and may be communicated formally or informally. Negative feedback shall be considered in SLCS' ongoing commitment to improving services.

PROCEDURE

SLCS will ensure the Complaint Process is available in plain language to program participants and to any individual who requests it, and will post it on SLCS' website (www.slcs.ca). A formal written complaint is not required to initiate the complaint process, but written documentation will be required, as all complaints are documented and reviewed annually by the Board of Directors as one method to evaluate the effectiveness of SLCS' services and operations.

When a concern or complaint arises, the goal is to have the individual(s) directly involved resolve the concern/complaint in a timely and prompt manner to the extent that the issue and circumstances permit.

Information on how to make a complaint:

SLCS shall have information about the Complaint Process:

- available in plain language and posted at all sites;
- available in print; and
- available on-line

All complaints will remain confidential to the parties involved and there shall be no reprisal towards the complainant. SLCS welcomes feedback to ensure the supports provided effectively meet the needs of each participant.


Information about the complaints/feedback and process shall be provided upon request by applicable Ministries/legislation or as per the Serious Occurrence Reporting guidelines.

Consideration shall be given to any conflict of interest that exists or may arise between the complainant and those who may be involved in managing and/or resolving the complaint. The following steps are designed to promote the resolution of a complaint and are to be taken when possible or appropriate:

Step 1: Complaint/Feedback received

- a) Verbally by a SLCS employee, Board member, student or volunteer – The individual receiving the complaint/feedback is responsible for documenting the complaint on the Complaint/Feedback Form (AD 106) and informing their manager, Director or designate.

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Feedback received from program participants shall be managed in accordance with Policy 7.21 Feedback Process for Program Participants, utilizing the Participant Resolution Form (BC 100). Should the feedback be unresolved and require escalation to the Senior Director of Operations, a determination will be made whether to direct the feedback/concern to this Complaint Policy.

- b) In writing – The individual receiving the complaint in writing (email, letter, etc.) is responsible to forward the complaint to the Manager, Director or designate upon receipt. A copy of the complaint shall be forwarded to the Executive Director or designate upon receipt.

Step 2: Acknowledgement

The individual making the complaint shall be contacted by a SLCS manager or Director within three (3) business days and shall receive:

- an acknowledged receipt of the complaint, and
- the next steps and expected time frame to respond to the complaint/feedback.

Step 3: Response

All efforts shall be made to ensure a timely and effective resolution to the complaint. The complainant shall have the opportunity to schedule a meeting in person or over the phone to discuss the complaint and resolution.

A written response shall be provided to the complainant regarding the agreed upon resolution within seven (7) to ten (10) business days of the meeting. If additional time is required, ongoing communication will be maintained; with the goal to resolve within 30 days of initial receipt of the complaint.


Step 4 (a): Resolution

The Executive Director or designate shall be advised of the complaint and forwarded a copy of the complaint at the time of receipt. The written response regarding the resolution shall be forwarded to the Executive Director within five (5) business days. The Executive Director is responsible for reporting to the Board of Directors any complaint that puts SLCS at elevated risk as noted above.

If the matter has not reached a resolution; follow Step 4(b),

Step 4(b): Next Steps

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If the issue is not satisfactorily resolved, upon written request, the complaint process will continue and the above timeframes, roles and responsibilities will be in effect. The following successive approaches are made by contacting the following:

- 1) Executive Director if the complainant is not satisfied with the response by the manager or Director; Board of Directors if the complainant is not satisfied with the response by the Executive Director;
- 2) Other options where applicable: Lawyer, Probation or Parole Officer, Provincial Ombudsman, Ontario Human Rights Commission
- 3) Program Supervisor, Manager or main funder contact
 - Ministry of Children, Community and Social Services
 - Ministry of Community Safety and Correctional Services
 - City of London
 - Ministry of the Attorney General
 - Ministry of the Solicitor General
 - Thames Valley District School Board
 - London District Catholic School Board
 - Correctional Service of Canada
 - Ministry of Health
 - Ontario Health

Attachments: Complaint/Feedback Form (AD 106), Participant Resolution Form (BC 100)