

SCS Complaint Process

Complaint Policy and Procedure

At Stratford Children's Services, we are committed to providing a transparent and accessible complaint process for everyone. We understand the importance of using clear, child-friendly language to ensure that all individuals, especially children, feel comfortable and confident in making a complaint.

Making a Complaint

1. Step 1: Submitting a Complaint

- **Children and Youth:** If you are a child or youth, you can tell any staff member you trust, write your complaint on a piece of paper, and place it in the mailbox located on the "Complaint Board" in your residence.
- **Parents and General Public:** If you are a parent or member of the general public, you can submit your complaint in writing, via email at james.smith@stratfordchildrensservices.net

2. Step 2: Recording and Notifying

- The staff member will record your complaint immediately and notify the on-call worker to ensure it is addressed quickly. You can request updates on your complaint at any time.

3. Step 3: Fair Review

- Your complaint will be reviewed by someone not involved in the issue you raised to ensure fairness. This could be our Human Resources designate or an SCS director if the complaint involves the HR designate.

4. Step 4: Status Updates

- We will keep you informed about the status of your complaint. You will receive an update within 15 days of us receiving it, and every 15 days after that until it is resolved.

Our Commitment to You

- **Confidentiality:** Your complaint will be handled privately and respectfully.
- **Documentation:** All details of your complaint and the steps we take in response will be documented in your file.
- **Support:** You can have an adult support person with you during any discussions about your complaint if you wish.

Availability of the Policy

Our complaint policy is made available to the public and can be reviewed on our website or in any of our residences. The "Complaint Board" in each residence displays all the necessary information, including how to contact the Ontario Ombudsman if you feel your concerns are not addressed satisfactorily.

Detailed Complaint Policy

Complaints Procedure for Parents and Public:

- **Best Practice:** All complaints are to be put in writing and directed to the Out-of-home-care Supervisor of Programs and cc'd to the Supervisor of Out-of-home-care Programs.
- **Mail Handling:** Every licensee shall ensure that where mail is opened or an article removed from mail to a resident in a residence operated by a licensee, the reason for opening the mail or removing the article is noted in the resident's case record.
 - **Intent:** This policy ensures the child's right to privacy while protecting them from harmful material.
 - **Indicators:** Documentation in case records noting reasons for opening mail or removing material.
- **Interview Process:** SCS and program staff ensure children in the residence are permitted to receive and send private correspondence. Staff should document if mail was opened or material was removed.
- **Communication Rights:** A child in care has a right to communicate privately with family, legal representatives, advocates, and other support persons.

Privacy and Personal Possessions:

- **Intent:** Ensure residents have a reasonable amount of privacy and possession of their personal property.
- **Indicators:** Documentation of any complaints about privacy or personal possessions and how they were addressed.

Contact Information:

For more details or to discuss any concerns, please feel free to contact us directly at [Contact Information] or visit our website to access the complaint form and policy documents.