

DURHAM ASSOCIATION FOR FAMILY RESPITE SERVICES (DAFRS)
Operational Policies and Procedures Manual for Respite and Facilitation Supports

COMPLAINTS POLICY

Policy: DAFRS will ensure that all people receiving support are aware of their right to express complaints about any DAFRS service or support and to seek remedy. DAFRS will also receive complaints from others in the community.

Guidelines:

- A) People supported (family members or other representatives) have the right to express a complaint to DAFRS at any time.
- A person has the right to seek outside help
 - If the complaint is one of abuse, DAFRS abuse policy will supersede this policy.
 - This policy and procedure will be explained to each person supported in a manner that he or she can understand; with the assistance of others, external to DAFRS, to aid in his or her understanding.
 - The Agency organizational chart and other visual aids will be used to assist people in understanding who they can approach.

Although these are the steps for people to follow when they have a formal complaint, a person may start the complaint process at any Step and they can expect to be supported to file the complaint. People will be encouraged to follow the protocol steps of the Complaint Process.

- B) Complaints from the Public will be received within the following parameters:
- a. If it is in respect to witnessing the improper treatment of people known to be supported through DAFRS.
 - b. That the complaint be written and presented on the form available to people at the front desk of the DAFRS Office at 850 King Street West, Oshawa, ON L1J 8N5 or by calling 905-436-2500 to receive the Complaint Form.
 - c. The procedural steps (Step 1 and 2) within the Complaints Procedure apply to people supported by DAFRS. The public would proceed to Step 3, reporting to the Executive Director.

Procedure to file a Formal Complaint:

Step 1:

The person wishing to advance a complaint will contact the DAFRS employee involved and attempt to resolve the complaint through informal discussion. The DAFRS employee will document the complaint in the supported individual's file as well as the resolution, if achieved.

What the person can expect:

Support if necessary to resolve the situation.

Step 2:

If resolution is not reached in Step 1, the person advancing the complaint will complete a Complaint Form, which can be obtained from Human Resources, or file the details in an alternate format (eg. audio). The Complaint Form explains the details of the situation and is forwarded in a sealed envelope to the appropriate Manager's attention.

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What the person can expect:

The Manager will meet with the supported individual and all relevant parties within two days of receipt of the written complaint. The Manager will document all details of the complaint, as well as the resolution. A copy of all documentation will be forwarded to the Executive Director and to the supported individual's confidential file. Once approved by the Executive Director, the supported individual will receive a copy of the documented resolution.

Step 3:

If the complaint is not resolved at Step 2, the Executive Director or designate, provided that designate is not the subject of the complaint, will investigate the complaint by meeting with the supported individual and a representative of his/her choice, as well as all relevant parties.

What the person can expect:

The Executive Director or designate will meet with the supported individual and all relevant parties within two days of being advised that the complaint was not been resolved at Step 2. All details of the complaint will be documented. This information will be maintained in the supported individual's confidential file. As well, a copy of the documented resolution will be forwarded to the supported individual.

Step 4:

The decision of the Executive Director based on a direct review or consideration of the report of the designate will be the final decision on the complaint, unless any one of the following conditions exist:

1. The Executive Director has been named in the complaint
2. Member(s) of the Board of Directors have been named in the complaint
3. The complaint documents a contravention of Board Policy
4. A conflict of interest situation exists between the person advancing the complaint and the Executive Director
5. Any further instance where the Executive Director considers it reasonable and prudent to refer the matter to the Board of Directors.

In all of the above circumstances the Executive Director will advise the Chair of the Board.

Step 5:

If the complaint is not resolved at Step 4, the Chair of the Board will review the details. The Chair of the Board will then promptly advise the Board of Directors of the complaint. The Board of Directors will investigate the complaint as necessary and decide on a reasonable resolution. The Chair of the Board will communicate the resolution to the person advancing the complaint. All Board documentation will be added to the supported individual's confidential file.