



## **Children & Families First Client Grievance Policy**

**Purpose:** The rights of program participants are to be respected throughout the organization. Program participants have the right to formally express and resolve grievances or complaints.

**Policy:**

Children & Families First shall establish and implement procedures to ensure that applicants, program participants, and other stakeholders have the right to formally express and resolve grievances, including denial of services. Process will include:

- The right to file a grievance without interference or retaliation.
- Timely written notification of the resolution and an explanation of any further appeal, rights, or recourse.
- At least one level of review that does not involve the person about whom the complaint has been made or the person who reached the decision under review.



## **Children & Families First**

### **Client Grievance/Complaint Procedures**

Children & Families First makes every effort to act in the best interest of our program participants. If a program participant has a concern, a complaint, or wants to appeal a decision, the Complaint and Appeal Procedure is as follows:

1. The program participant is encouraged to first express any feedback about the service directly to their worker.
2. In some instances, the program participant and the direct worker are unable to resolve the complaint, or the program participant may wish to bypass the worker for some reason. Then the program participant is instructed to submit their grievance/complaint to the program supervisor or program manager. The initial grievance/complaint can be made in person, by phone, by email, or in writing. Programs are responsible for informing program participants of the program supervisor or manager and the program grievance process.
3. Once notification of the grievance/complaint is received by the worker's supervisor or program manager, the supervisory staff member reviews the complaint and responds in writing to the complaint in a timely manner, no more than 15 days from receipt of the grievance/complaint.
4. If the matter remains unresolved, the program participant may request further review by the Director of Operations & Risk Management (DOR). The DOR reviews the grievance/complaint and makes a final determination in writing within 15 days from receipt.

Additionally, any complaint/grievance above the direct worker level will be reported through the incident reporting system and included in the aggregate Quarterly Incident Report. The program supervisor or manager is responsible for reporting complaints/grievances that rise above the direct worker level. For grievances/complaints resolved by the program supervisor or manager, the program is responsible for maintaining documentation of the resolution. For grievances/complaints resolved by the DOR, the DOR is responsible for maintaining documentation of the resolution.

If the services are paid for by another organization, the program participant may also have the right to appeal through that organization. The agency will inform the program participant of the name and contact information of the other organization that paid for the services if they wish to appeal through the other organization.

*Note: Programs may have their own specific program participant grievance procedures. Program procedure may provide additional guidance, contact persons, or process but does not supersede the agency policy and procedure.*

#### **Privacy Rights:**

Program participants have the right to complain to Children & Families First or to the U. S. Department of Health and Human Services Office of Civil Rights, HIPAA Privacy Rule Complaint if the program participant believes their privacy rights have been violated. Complaints filed with Children & Families First should be made directly to the Children & Families First DOR at the contact below.

**For more information on the grievance process or to submit a privacy complaint, contact the Director of Operations & Risk Management at (302) 650-9199 or [shannon.fisch@cffde.org](mailto:shannon.fisch@cffde.org).**