

	Policy Type	Client Services
	Category	Client Rights and Responsibilities
	Name	Complaints and Appeals
	Policy Number	CRR 1.3
	Approved by	Board of Directors
	Date Approved	October 26 th 2017
	Last Review Date	August 6 th 2024
	Review Frequency	Three Years

Purpose: **To ensure a professional, timely, and consistent response to all complaints without the fear of reprisal; to resolve and accurately record complaints; and to collect, evaluate, and analyze complaints to identify patterns and make adjustments/ improvements to programs and services if required.**

Scope: The Red Door Family Shelter sites are Booth Shelter (City of Toronto) and Gender Based Violence Shelter (Ministry of Children and Community Services) and includes the procedure for both shelter sites.

Policy: The Red Door Family Shelter (Red Door) aims to provide safe, supportive environments and excellent client service. Red Door is committed to ensuring that all employees respond to complaints from clients and community members/agencies professionally and appropriately. The Complaints and Appeals Policy and Procedure will be used to resolve disputes between parties.

The Complaint and Appeals Policy and Procedure will be explained to clients as part of the Admissions Intake and outlined in the Welcome Package. It will also be posted on each shelter’s communications board.

Managers will cooperate with Hostel Services/Ministry of Children and Community Services (MCCSS) in reviewing any such complaints, including allowing Hostel Services/MCCSS staff on the premises to conduct a site visit or interview with employees and /or clients.

The Complaint Resolution process will be used to address and work toward resolving client or community/agency members’ concerns. If complainants feel their complaints have not been resolved satisfactorily, they have the right to take appeals to successively higher levels within the Red Door. The Appeal process will exclude any staff member involved in the original complaint or prior appeal.

Complaints that cannot be resolved after using the complaints process may be directed to Hostel Services (Booth Shelter) or the Ministry of Community and Social Services (GBV Shelter) for further resolution.

A written record of all formal complaints and resolutions will be kept for future reference or analysis.

If a complaint is found to be vexatious or frivolous, this will be recorded in the resolution document, and the resident will be supported in learning healthy ways to deal with conflict.

Definitions: A Complaint is any expression of displeasure or dissatisfaction regarding the services or programs provided by Red Door, how these services and programs are delivered, or how Red Door operates within the community.

Complaints may include but are not limited to the following:

- Complaint about a staff member
- Complaint about a client(s)
- Complaints about service provision, i.e., accommodations or programs
- Complaints from concerned community members/agencies

Procedure: **Complaints Procedure**

1. Receipt and recording of complaint:
 - a) Clients are encouraged to bring their concerns and/or complaints to an employee—in person or by phone. The employee will listen to the concern/complaint raised and speak directly with all parties to achieve a resolution. Complaints can be verbal or in writing. In either case, they will be given the same degree of importance. Although employees should encourage complainants to resolve complaints informally through cooperative problem-solving and mediation, complainants can write their complaints in writing without first making a verbal complaint.
 - b) Every effort will be made to ensure that clients or any complainant have the right to maintain anonymity (unknown to others), and all complaint details will remain confidential.
 - c) Employees will assist clients in filling out formal Complaints And appeal forms if necessary.
 - d) If a client is not satisfied with the resolution, he/she will be encouraged to submit a complaint in writing. A Complaint Form may be completed by the client or community member/agency or communicated to an employee, who will record relevant details of the complaint.

The Complaint Form (Appendix I) should include details such as:

- Date of Complaint and Appeal
- What is the nature of the complaint/concern
- Who is involved
- Where and when – other relevant information
- Resolution or recommendations for resolution
- A completed Complaint Form will be submitted to a manager or their designate for review and sign-off.

Note: Completed Complaint Forms will be scanned into the Complaint files and the Complaint Tracker forms for future reference and tracking purposes. Completed Complaint Forms will be securely stored in the Complaints Folder on the Red Door Drive. Once they have been scanned and checked for legibility, handwritten documents will be shredded.

2. Investigation:

- e) The manager who has received the Complaint Form will investigate. All efforts will be made to conduct interviews in person, though in extenuating circumstances, they may be conducted over the phone or through a third party.
- f) Complaints concerning managers will be submitted to and investigated by the Site Manager.

3. Resolution:

- a) Whenever possible, the complaint will be resolved within 2-5 business days. A Manager or Site Manager will determine the required follow-up.
- b) Based on the investigation, the appropriate measures will be taken to achieve a resolution.
- c) Where appropriate, the complainant should be consulted about the desired outcome to achieve a resolution.
- d) The outcome/resolution decision will be recorded on the Complaint Form and communicated to the complainant.

Appeal Procedure

If a complainant is not satisfied with the outcome of the Complaints Procedure, they may initiate the Appeal Procedure. The following steps outline the process:

1. **Initiating an Appeal:**

- o If clients wish to appeal, they will be directed to the Director of Client Services.

2. **Meeting Arrangement:**

- o Within 2-5 business days of the Director of Client Services receiving the appeal, a meeting will be arranged with the complainant to review the details and work towards a resolution.

3. **Further Escalation:**

- o If the complainant is unsatisfied with the resolution, they will be directed to the Executive Director.

4. **Final Steps:**

- o If no resolution is reached with the Executive Director, the complainant will be given the contact details for the Agency Review Officer at Hostel Services (Booth Shelter) or the Program Supervisor at the Ministry of Community and Social Services (GBV Shelter).
- o Hostel Services and the Ministry of Community and Social Services reserve the right to conduct on-site interviews and investigations to address the complaint.

Continuous Follow-up/Review:

1. Complaint resolution will be a standing item at management meetings, used to evaluate, analyze, and recommend changes where necessary.
2. The nature of the complaints will be the focus, and appropriate measures will be recommended and implemented to avert future occurrences (e.g., policy and procedural changes, program delivery changes, staff training).
3. Information will be shared with frontline staff to provide updates on appropriate recommended and implemented measures.

Download the Complaint Form Below

[Complaints Form](#)