



<b>POLICY:</b>					
<b>Complaints and Feedback Policy</b>					
<b>Policy #:</b>	<b>Section:</b>	<b>Effective:</b>	<b>Reviewed:</b>	<b>Revised:</b>	<b>Approved By:</b>
2-9	Section 2 -Commitment to Individuals with Developmental Disabilities	December 18, 2012	April 10, 2025	April 10, 2025	Executive Director

## **POLICY STATEMENT:**

Sudbury Developmental Services (SDS) is committed to ensuring that individuals receiving services, their families, guardians, and the broader community have the right to provide feedback, express concerns, and question decisions made by SDS. SDS values feedback as a vital tool for continuous improvement and responsive service delivery, with a commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) principles.

## **PROCEDURE:**

### **Person-Centered Approach**

- The needs, rights, and interests of individuals with developmental disabilities and those acting on their behalf will guide the complaints resolution process.
- Individuals will be supported in expressing concerns in a way that respects their communication preferences and accessibility needs.

### **Right to Be Heard and Supported**

- SDS ensures that individuals with developmental disabilities can fully participate in the complaints process, with access to advocacy and support as needed.
- SDS will provide accommodations, such as accessible formats and communication supports, upon request.

### **Equity and Fairness**

- Every person has the right to understand how decisions are made and to respond to decisions that affect them.
- All complaints will be addressed with transparency, without bias, intimidation, or retaliation.

### **Commitment to Diversity and Inclusion**

- SDS recognizes and respects cultural, linguistic, and identity-based differences in the complaints and feedback process.
- The policy will be available in plain language and other accessible formats, ensuring equitable access to information

- SDS will document, review, and address all complaints, striving for a resolution that is satisfactory to all parties.
- Complaints deemed frivolous or vexatious may not be pursued further at the agency's discretion.
- SDS will ensure that submitting a complaint does not negatively impact services and supports.
- The policy complies with the **Services and Supports to Promote the Social Inclusion of Persons with Developmental Disabilities Act, 2008** and relevant regulations.

### Serious Incidents and Reporting

- SDS will report complaints involving potential criminal offenses to the police.
- Complaints categorized as **serious occurrences** will be reported to the Ministry of Children, Community, and Social Services.
- Records of complaints will be analyzed for systemic improvements.

### Definitions

- **Feedback** includes positive or negative comments related to SDS services, supports, and facilities, which may be formal (e.g., written surveys) or informal (e.g., verbal comments to staff).
- **Complaint** refers to an expression of dissatisfaction regarding SDS services, supports, or facilities. Complaints may be formal (e.g., written letters) or informal (e.g., verbal expressions to staff).
- SDS ensures that both feedback and complaints processes are accessible to people with disabilities.

### Complaint and Feedback Process

SDS encourages resolution at the lowest level possible while ensuring that all complaints are addressed fairly and efficiently. The process is structured as follows:

#### 1. Initial Response (Frontline Employee)

- The complainant should first address their concern with the SDS employee involved.
- If resolved at this stage, the complaint and resolution will be documented in **AIMS**, with a copy sent to the program manager and Executive Director (ED).
- If unresolved, the complaint is escalated to the program manager.

#### 2. Formal Review (Program Manager)

- If unresolved at the frontline level, the complainant may submit a written complaint to the responsible **Program Manager**.
- The Manager will investigate and provide a written response within **10 business days**.
- If additional time is required, the complainant will be notified in writing.

### 3. Executive Director Review

- If dissatisfaction remains, an appeal can be submitted to the **Executive Director (ED)** within **30 days** of the Manager's response.
- The ED will review all documentation, attempt resolution, and provide a written decision within **10 business days**.
- The Board of Directors Chairperson will be notified of the complaint and resolution.

### 4. Board of Directors Review

- If still unresolved, the complainant may appeal to the **Chair of the Board of Directors** within **30 days** of the ED's decision.
- The Board Chair will review the matter and provide a written response within **10 business days**.

### 5. Ministry of Children, Community, and Social Services

- If dissatisfaction persists, an appeal may be submitted to the **Program Supervisor at the Ministry**.

### Training and Implementation

- All SDS employees will receive training on the complaints and feedback policy during orientation and through annual refresher sessions.
- Documentation of training will be maintained in employee personnel files.

### Communication and Accessibility

- The policy will be available in multiple formats, ensuring accessibility for individuals with diverse needs.
- It will be posted publicly on SDS's website and provided upon request.
- People receiving services will be informed of the policy upon intake, during onboarding, and through annual refreshers.

### Evaluation and Continuous Improvement

- SDS will conduct an annual review of complaints and feedback to improve policies, procedures, and service delivery.
- The Ministry may request reports on complaints and resolutions as part of risk assessment and quality assurance.