

Policy Number:	ETH 4
Policy Name:	Client Grievance Process
Domain:	Ethical Practices and Client Rights
Applies to:	All Staff
Policy Location:	S: » Agency Policy Manual
Effective Date:	11/14/12
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Policy

Clients are provided with a systematic method to file any grievance about the services they receive without fear of retaliation. All clients are given information at the time of intake that includes the process and their right to file a grievance. Information on this process is also posted in a prominent area on site. In addition, clients will be given the information and forms again upon request or at the initiation of a grievance.

Related to adoption cases only: Birth parents, prospective adoptive parents, adoptive parents, and adoptees may submit complaints about any services or activities of Children & Families of Iowa (CFI) or other providers assisting with the adoption that they believe are out of compliance with the standards of the Hague Convention, the International Adoption Act (IAA), or the regulations implementing the IAA. Clients are not discouraged from filing a complaint or questioning the conduct of or expressing an opinion about the performance of CFI. If a client files a grievance, the quality of services and the professionalism of staff provided to them will not be affected in any negative way.

Procedure

1. The process for addressing a grievance starts with a discussion of the written grievance with the client's assigned worker. If the grievance remains unresolved after this meeting, the process goes to Step 2.
2. The client next discusses the grievance with the Program Director within five working days after discussing the issue with the client's assigned worker. The Program Director will investigate the complaint and respond in writing to the client within 10 working days after receiving the dispute or such additional period as the Program Director and complainant may agree. If the grievance remains unresolved at this step, the process moves on to Step 3.
3. The client may then submit a written letter noting the grievance and the results of Steps 1 and 2 to the CEO of the agency within 10 working days of completing Step Two. The CEO will then investigate the complaint and respond in writing to the client within 10 working days after receipt of written notification from the client.
4. The action of the CEO will be deemed the final action of the agency.
5. The following are applicable only in adoption cases:
 - a. A summary of complaints filed is provided to the Secretary and accrediting entities on a semi-annual basis and upon request. The summary includes the date, the complaint, and how the complaint was resolved. Trends identified through the quality improvement process including complaint data and satisfaction survey results and any systematic or programmatic changes that are to be made or have been made because of such trends in complaints will also be included.
 - b. If the complaint is a case of urgency or alleged fraud, CFI provides an expedited review of complaints. This is determined by the CEO, or the Board of Directors when applicable.

- c. If clients are still dissatisfied with CFI's response to their complaint, they may contact the Hague Complaint Registry at:

http://adoption.state.gov/hague_convention/agency_accreditation/complaints.php

6. Documentation in the client file will be made for all cases where a Supervisor is called regarding a client grievance. The Client Grievance Procedure is reviewed with all clients at intake and they sign a statement acknowledging that they have been informed of the grievance procedure. This statement is included in the client's file.
7. All written grievances and the Program Director's response should be sent to the Quality Management & Quality Improvement Administrator as part of the critical incident review process.
8. The Quality Management & Quality Improvement Administrator will present compiled and summarized client grievance information to the Board for trend analysis, as needed.