

POLICY	CATEGORY/SECTION BOARD - GENERAL
	SUBJECT CORPORATE COMPLAINTS

AUTHORITY

Governance and Procedural By-law-01-2017

INTENT OF POLICY

- To establish a framework for receiving and handling complaints in a clear, consistent and effective manner
- To ensure TBDSSAB Board and staff members are aware of what to do if a complaint is received
- To ensure all complaints are handled fairly and in a timely manner.
- To ensure complaints are, wherever possible, resolved and that relationships are maintained

DEFINITIONS

A complaint is an expression of dissatisfaction related to a TBDSSAB program, service, or staff member, where a person believes that TBDSSAB or its staff has not provided a service experience to the individual's satisfaction at the point of service delivery and a response or resolution is expected.

A complaint is distinct from:

- Request for a service: A general or specific request for service or request for information regarding TBDSSAB made by an individual that is resolved at the point of service delivery (i.e. Tenant calling Housing Maintenance to report a problem). Although a complaint could be made if TBDSSAB fails to deal with these effectively.
- Feedback: An opinion, comment and expression of interest in a TBDSSAB program of service by an individual
- Compliment: An expression of approval for a TBDSSAB service, staff member, program, product or process
- Suggestion: An idea submitted to TBDSSAB by an individual with the aim of improving services, programs, products or processes
- Ontario Works (OW) Review Process: OW clients have the opportunity to request an Internal Review and a further review by the Social Assistance Benefit Tribunal under the OW regulations

IMPLEMENTATION / BOARD APPROVAL DATE:

October 18, 2018

REVISION DATE(S):

PAGE

1 of 4

CATEGORY/SECTION BOARD – GENERAL	SUBJECT CORPORATE COMPLAINTS
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Some complaints are exempt, including:

- Anonymous complaints: Anonymous complaints are difficult, if not impossible, to assess or investigate and will not be dealt with through the complaint handling process
- Complaints by employees: Alternative procedures are available to employees to initiate complaints within the organization
- Complaints about services (i.e. Tenants cannot use the formal complaints procedure to complain about rent increases or rent levels)
- Complaints involving any form of litigation

Formal Complaint Process

In order for a complaint to enter the formal documentation, investigation and resolution process, it must meet one of the following criteria:

- The complaint could not be resolved at the front-line staff level
- The complaint was initially addressed or directed to a Management level or above

Who Can Make a Complaint

- TBDSSAB tenants, clients and service users
- Any member of the public
- An advocate (Service Users may decide to ask someone to help them make their complaint. Service Users must complete the appropriate consent form to designate the advocate. The consent form must be received by TBDSSAB before the complaint will be discussed with the advocate.

Who Can Not Make a Complaint

- TBDSSAB Board members should not advocate on behalf of a complainant
- TBDSSAB staff members

POLICY

To enable the timely consideration of a complaint, specific details of the incident, conduct, or behaviour giving rise to the complaint should be provided.

Complaints can be made:

- In person
- Over the phone
- Online (Via Contact Us email address on website)
- In writing (Via letter or email)

TBDSSAB encourages complaints, where possible, to be submitted in writing (online, email or letter).

IMPLEMENTATION / BOARD APPROVAL DATE:

October 18, 2018

REVISION DATE(S):

PAGE

2 of 4

CATEGORY/SECTION BOARD – GENERAL	SUBJECT CORPORATE COMPLAINTS
--	--

All complaints will be dealt with promptly, fairly and sensitively. The complaint resolution process is a part of a quality culture where complaints are an opportunity for improvement.

Complaint Service Standards:

- Positive attitude toward dealing with feedback, compliments and complaints and respect for the complainant
- Reinforce the commitment of TBDSSAB to quality service delivery and encouragement for provision of feedback on what is and what can be improved

The initial complaint will be acknowledged as received within 2 business days. If the complaint does not provide enough information for assessment and investigation, the complainant may be contacted for more details.

If enough details are provided, a complaint will be assessed, investigated and a response will be provided in writing within 14 days. More complicated complaints may require more time to investigate. TBDSSAB will communicate its expectations where a longer period is required.

Complaints on Social Media

As social media influences others, it is important TBDSSAB treats a complaint on Twitter, Instagram and Facebook as seriously as a face-to-face complaint. The target time to acknowledge a social media complaint is 24-48 hours. Complaints on social media are distinct from an opinion or comment and must include an identifying name.

STANDARDS OF APPLICATION

Roles and Responsibilities

The Supervisor, Communications & Engagement is responsible for receiving, and directing formal complaints to the appropriate Division; monitoring the status of complaints; and ensuring a response in accordance with the service standards.

Managers and Directors are responsible for documenting, investigating and ensuring a response to complaints about services which fall within their Division. Complaints about staff are to be processed by that staff member’s immediate supervisor unless otherwise requested.

IMPLEMENTATION / BOARD APPROVAL DATE: October 18, 2018 REVISION DATE(S):	PAGE 3 of 4
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CATEGORY/SECTION BOARD – GENERAL	SUBJECT CORPORATE COMPLAINTS
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Staff is required to have knowledge and understanding of: the purpose of receiving complaints, the process through which a complaint can be made and the service standards that apply to complaints.

RELATED POLICIES

BRD-01:103 – TBDSSAB Board Members, Non-Members of Board Committees and Advisory Tables Code of Conduct

RELATED PROCEDURES

Complaints Procedure