COMMUNITY LIVING
Guelph Wellington

Classification: **Association Operations**	Giving Feedback (Feedback and Complaints Policy and Procedure)	
Policy #: **A105**		Effective Date: **June 2002**
Revised Date: **January 2025**	Review Date: **January 2025**	Next review: **January 2026**

Community Living Guelph Wellington (CLGW) is committed to offering excellent support in a way that feels safe, respectful, and inclusive. CLGW understands that each person has different wants and needs, and they will make choices that matter most to them. CLGW also knows that sometimes people need to give feedback.

This *Giving Feedback - Feedback and Complaints Policy* is a guide to anyone connected to CLGW who needs to provide feedback. It helps us work together to provide excellent support. We believe each person who connects to CLGW has a role in providing and responding to feedback.

How it works

Feedback can be positive or negative. People may not agree on the feedback. When you provide any feedback, do it respectfully. The *How We Treat Each Other – Code of Conduct (policy A100)* might help you.

What to do first

When you have feedback, talk to the person involved first. If it is positive feedback, they deserve to hear it first. If it is negative feedback, they may be able to make it better. This should be done as soon as you can. Depending on the feedback, and how you feel about the talk, it can stay informal and not follow the formal steps in this document.

Following the policy

We encourage that feedback or complaints be shared with the person involved first. Sometimes, they might not be able to address your feedback. When this happens, the *Giving Feedback - Feedback and Complaints Policy* and its steps will help you have your feedback addressed.

However, some complaints are very serious. Serious complaints may need to go directly to the supervisor or manager instead.

For example, if you are concerned about neglect or abuse, you should go directly to the supervisor or manager. They will support you through next steps.

CLGW has a few additional policies for when serious complaints occur. These policies include:

- Violence in the Workplace
- Neglect or Abuse Allegations
- Grievances (and Letters of Understanding in the Collective Agreement)
- Serious Complaints (submitted to the ministry)

Rights and responsibilities

The person supported by CLGW, their family members, caregivers, volunteers, community members, or visitors should let CLGW know when they could be doing things better; this is a right and a responsibility. CLGW also encourages people to let us know when we are doing things right.

Employees and volunteers have the right to be told when there is a complaint that involves them. They also have the right and responsibility to help make it better.

Who this document is for

This policy is for people supported by CLGW, their family members, caregivers, volunteers, community members, or visitors. It also applies to employees, and for unionized employees, the Collective Agreement and the grievance process also applies.

What we mean by feedback and complaints

Feedback

Feedback can be about things that CLGW does well or things CLGW could do better.

- You can give feedback through a conversation, a letter, an email or a phone call. You can also ask someone at CLGW to document your feedback.
- CLGW may ask for feedback. We can gather that feedback in many ways (for example: by a survey, a suggestion box, or an online form).

All feedback, whether positive or negative, formal or informal, is important to CLGW.

Complaints

Complaints are when someone is unhappy with the support that CLGW provides. A person who is supported by CLGW, or a person acting on their behalf, may have a concern or complaint about CLGW's services.

- You can submit a complaint through a conversation, a letter, an email, or a phone call. You can also ask someone at CLGW to document your complaint.

A complaint does not include feedback on matters unrelated to the agency and the services and supports it provides.

Some complaints are serious, and CLGW must report those to the Ministry of Children, Community and Social Services. These serious complaints are described as:

- A complaint made by or on behalf of an individual who is receiving a service, that is an alleged violation of their rights or their privacy.
- A complaint made by or about an individual who is receiving a service that CLGW considers to be of a serious nature.
- A complaint made about the operational, physical or safety standards of the services received by an individual.

Commitments CLGW makes

Annual reviews

The executive director, or someone who is acting on their behalf, will review the *Giving Feedback - Feedback and Complaints Policy* every year.

CLGW will review this policy based on the Feedback and Complaints guidance given by the Government of Ontario: https://www.ontario.ca/page/policy-directives-service-agencies-under-authority-services-and-supports-promote-social-inclusion

Sharing the policy

People who are new to CLGW

Everyone connected to CLGW will get a copy of this document when they first get involved with CLGW. If the policy changes, CLGW will let people know about the change and share the new policy as soon as possible.

Reminders

All people supported, their families or caregivers, and employees will get a reminder of the *Giving Feedback - Feedback and Complaints Policy* every year.

Website

The newest *Giving Feedback - Feedback and Complaints Policy* will always be on the CLGW public website.

Understanding the document

The *Giving Feedback - Feedback and Complaints Policy* is written in plain language. If a person needs help understanding and acting on it, they will also have help.

Response times

CLGW will respond quickly to feedback:

- When a person shares feedback, they will hear back within two (2) working days.
- If CLGW needs to follow up or to look into it, CLGW will try to respond in the timelines in this document.

Resolving complaints fairly

We must take great care to avoid conflict of interest or the appearance of conflict of interest when we resolve a complaint. We may need to include someone outside of CLGW to make sure that the review process is not coercive, intimidating, or biased. This may happen at any time in the process.

Reporting on feedback

CLGW will keep notes about the feedback and actions taken. Anyone involved in the feedback can ask to see the notes within one (1) calendar year from when the feedback was first shared.

CLGW may need to report the complaint or feedback to other organizations in some cases:

- To the police: any alleged, suspected, or witnessed abuse that may be a criminal offence. This is required by Regulation 299/10 under the Services to Promote the Social Inclusion of Persons with Developmental Disabilities Act, 2008.
- To the Ministry of Children, Community and Social Services: any feedback that may be a **Serious Occurrence or Serious Complaint** through MCCSS' reporting system.

Improving the policy

Each year, our Senior Leadership Team will:

- Review the *Giving Feedback - Feedback and Complaints Policy*
- Analyze the complaints
- Consider any feedback given
- Make the policy better

Steps to Follow (Procedure)	Effective Date: June 2002
Revised Date: October 2022	Next Review Date: January 2025

Feedback and Complaints – **Steps to follow**

Follow these steps if you have feedback or a complaint about services and/or activities provided by Community Living Guelph Wellington (CLGW).

If you are feeling uncomfortable about your feedback or complaint, we encourage you to talk to a friend or a staff person to help you.

If you are feeling unhappy about your support in anyway, please tell someone so we can work to make it better.

Step 1: Talk to the person involved

1. Share your feedback or complaint with the person involved. If that feels scary, talk to someone who can help.
2. Give them a chance to resolve the concern. You can do this in person by talking, or by writing about your concerns, or with the help of a friend or advisor.
3. The person involved should try to follow up as soon as possible (within two working days).
4. We hope that concerns can be resolved through a conversation. If you have tried to work out your concerns with the person involved, and it did not work out, go to the next step.

Step 2: Discuss with the person's supervisor

1. Let the supervisor know your feedback or complaint. You can do this by phone, email or in writing. Include how you have tried to work it out.
2. The supervisor will follow up and schedule a time to meet with you within five (5) working days of knowing about your concern.
3. Before this meeting, the supervisor will talk with the staff person about what happened and may ask the staff person to come to the meeting. You can bring a friend or advisor to the meeting to help you.
4. In the meeting, the supervisor will ask you to describe the concern from your point of view and may also ask you for ideas about how to solve the problem. The goal is to agree on ideas to try. If you all agree on ideas to try, the supervisor will write them down.
5. You will get a letter or email from the supervisor within five (5) working days of the meeting. It will tell you if the suggested ideas from the meeting will be used. If the people in the meeting did not agree on ideas, the supervisor will share suggestions and reasons for them.
6. If you are not happy with what happened in this step, go to the next step.

Step 3: Discuss with the manager*

1. Let the manager know your feedback and complaint. You can do this by phone, email or in writing. Include how you have tried to work it out.
2. The manager will schedule a time to meet with you within 10 working days of knowing about your concern.
3. Before this meeting, the manager will speak with the supervisor to learn about the steps that the supervisor has taken to resolve the concern.
4. In the meeting, the manager will ask you to describe the concern from your point of view. They will also ask you how to solve the problem. The goal is to agree on ideas to try. If you all agree on ideas to try, the manager will write them down. You can bring a friend or advisor with you to the meeting to help you.
4. You will get a letter or email from the manager within five (5) working days of the meeting. It will tell you if the suggested ideas from the meeting will be used. If the people in the meeting did not agree on ideas, the manager will share suggestions and reasons for them. If there is no agreement, the manager will explain why.
5. If you are not happy with what happened in this step, go to the next step.

* Some people at CLGW do not have a supervisor **and** a manager. If this is the case, CLGW will support you to go from Step 2 to Step 4.

Step 4: Discuss with the director

1. If your concern is about the services you receive, please talk to the service director.
2. If your concern is about something else, please talk to the executive director.
3. Let the director know your feedback or complaint. You can do this by phone, email or in writing. Include how you have tried to work it out.
4. Within 15 working days of knowing about your concerns, the director will schedule a time to meet with you. The director will speak with the manager before the meeting to learn about the steps that have already been taken to resolve the problem.
5. In the meeting, the director will ask you to describe the concern from your point of view. They will also ask you how to solve the problem. The goal is to agree on ideas to try. If you all agree on ideas to try, the director will write them down. You can bring a friend or advisor with you to the meeting to help you.
6. You will get a letter or email from the director within five (5) working days of the meeting. It will tell you if the suggested ideas from the meeting will be used. If the people in the meeting did not agree on ideas, the director will share suggestions and reasons for them. If there is no agreement, the director will explain why.
7. If you are not happy with what happened in this step, go to the next step.

Important: Written and serious complaints are given directly to the director. The director may move the complaint to a different step to address the concern.

Step 5: Discuss with the board chair of CLGW

1. Let the executive director know about your feedback and complaint. Tell them that you want to talk to the board of directors about your concern. You can do this by phone, email, or in writing. Include how you have tried to work it out.
2. Within 20 working days of knowing about your request to speak to the board, a meeting will be scheduled. This meeting may be with the board chair and the executive director or a CLGW Board Committee and the executive director.

3. You will be informed of the date, time, and place of the meeting.
4. CLGW will provide a summary of all the meetings that have happened so far and what was done about your concerns.
5. In the meeting, you will share your concerns. They will ask you how to solve the problem. You can bring a friend or advisor with you to the meeting to help you.
6. You will receive a letter after the meeting with recommendations and the board's decision within 20 working days.

Step 6: Contact the Ministry of Children, Community and Social Services (MCCSS)

If you are still unhappy after following the other steps, you can ask MCCSS to review your concern(s). Include how you have tried to work it out. You can contact them at:

Ministry of Children, Community and Social Services
Developmental Services
200-6733 Mississauga Road
Mississauga, ON, L5N 6J5
Attention: Program Supervisor for Community Living Guelph Wellington, Central West

COMMUNITY LIVING
Guelph Wellington

Feedback and Complaints – **Ongoing operational considerations**

Community Living Guelph Wellington will develop an online tool, like a form (see Appendix A), where feedback and complaints may be submitted discretely and thoroughly. This form must be easy to use, accessible, and forwards complaints to a person or team who can meet the responsiveness expectation outlined in the policy.

To improve access to submitting feedback and complaints, CLGW will also need to develop tools that meet the accessibility needs of each person it supports. This includes, but is not limited to:

- People who do not have access to internet (e.g., establishing a dedicated answering machine with prompts).
- People who do not use words to communicate, or meet the literacy expectations of the form (e.g., a social story or pictogram form that 'initiates' a feedback or complaint request, that can then be followed up with by a support person or a delegate).
- Feedback tools that integrate with software people supported are already using (e.g. tablets in homes, Facebook Messenger, Zoom, and so on).
- Further consideration to consolidating feedback, inquiries or complaints into one form, to maximize access and solicit feedback.
- Establish a central log (if possible, integrated with CAPS-Alayacare and CiviCRM). For any known contacts in our organization, feedback and complaints are documented with their working data. Data must remain visible/available for 1 year and a simple process be made to share that information should the person providing feedback/complaint request the data. All feedback/complaints remain compiled in a central log for Quality Assurance Measures purposes, and for metrics. Unknown contacts to CLGW will be stored in the central log only.
- Determine who in CLGW will be responsible for receiving feedback and complaints, acknowledging receipt of feedback and complaint, and moving it to the appropriate next person for response. Establish appropriate backup roles to ensure no lag in response time. Integrate with IT Ticket system or other project management system to ensure that visibility exists that feedback and complaints are responded to.

Giving feedback

1. Talk to the person involved.

Hear back 2 days

Tell them your feedback.
Let them try to fix it.

If you're feeling uncomfortable about talking to the person, talk to a friend or a staff person to help you.

If you have tried to work it out, and it did not work, go to the next step.

2. Talk to the person's Supervisor.

Hear back 5 days

Tell them your feedback.
Tell them how you tried to work it out.
Let them try to fix it.

If you have tried to work it out, and it did not work, go to the next step.

3. Talk to the person's Manager.*

Hear back 10 days

Tell them your feedback.
Tell them how you tried to work it out.
Let them try to fix it.

*sometimes, a person's Supervisor is also their Manager. If that's the case, go directly to Step 4.

If you have tried to work it out, and it did not work, go to the next step.

4. Talk to a Director.

Hear back 15 days

Tell them your feedback.
Tell them how you tried to work it out.
Let them try to fix it.

? Feedback about Service? Talk to Service Director.

Feedback about something else? Talk to Executive Director.

Formal and serious complaints are given to the Executive Director or Service Director. They may move the complaint to a different step.

If you have tried to work it out, and it did not work, go to the next step.

5. Discuss with the Board Chair.

Hear back 20 days

Tell them your feedback.
Tell them how you tried to work it out.
Let them try to fix it.

Tell the Executive Director that you want to talk to the Board of Directors about your concern. Do this by phone, email or letter.

Still unhappy with how it worked out?
You may ask MCCSS to review your concern(s).

6. Contact Ministry of Children, Community and Social Services

Tell them your feedback.
Tell them how you tried to work it out.
Ask for review.