

Big Brothers Big Sisters of Oxford County

Risk Management:

Approved by: BBBS Board

Date of Approval: June 18, 2019

Date of Review: June 2023

Complaint Policy

Policy Number: 6.5

Number of Pages: 2

Policy Statement:

- This policy and procedure applies to complaints received by staff or board members of the agency about activities, programs, services, staff or volunteers

Rationale:

- It is in the interest of all parties that complaints are dealt with promptly and resolved as quickly as possible.
- Review of complaints is fair, impartial and respectful to all parties.
- Complainants are advised of their options to escalate their complaint to a more senior staff person if they are dissatisfied with treatment or outcome.
- Complainants are provided clear and understandable reasons for decisions relating to complaints.
- Updates are provided to complainants during review processes.
- Complaints are used to assist in improving services, policies and procedures.

Procedures:

1. Types of Complaints

A complaint is an expression of dissatisfaction about the service, actions or lack of action by the agency as an organization or a staff member or volunteer acting on behalf of the agency. Anyone personally affected can complain and their complaint will be reviewed in accordance with this procedure. Examples include but are not limited to

- Perceived failure to do something agreed upon
- Failure to observe policy or procedures
- Error made by a staff member/volunteer
- Unfair or discourteous actions and/or statements by staff member/volunteer

2. Complaint Receipt and Handling

A complaint may be received verbally (by phone or in person) or in writing (by mail, fax, email). If the complaint is received verbally the employee should ask for the complainant to record their complaint in writing, if they feel the complaint is serious. An employee or volunteer who receives a complaint should first determine the proper person to handle it. This will generally be the person who has the primary relationship with the complainant or has the specific knowledge that is needed to resolve the problem. It is the responsibility of the person who receives the complaint to either resolve it or transfer it to another person who can resolve it. If the complaint is transferred, the recipient must acknowledge to the transferor that they have received it and will act on it.

The person who initially receives the complaint should acknowledge to the complainant that the complaint has been received and will be acted on either by them or another employee. If a timeframe for action can be determined, that should be included in the acknowledgement. Basic contact information including name, phone number and email address should immediately be recorded.

3. Resolving the Complaint

Every effort should be made to resolve complaints received in a timely fashion. When receiving a verbal complaint, staff should listen and seek to understand the complaint, and may attempt to resolve it immediately. Complaints received in writing shall be acknowledged within two business days, and staff shall attempt to resolve the matter within ten business days.

Where a complaint cannot be easily resolved, it shall be escalated to the Service Delivery manager or Resource Development Manager. If they cannot resolve the complaint, it shall be

escalated to the Executive Director. If the complaint is about the Executive Director, it shall be handled by the Chair of the Board. Complainants should be kept informed of the status of their complaint. Every attempt should be made to resolve an escalated complaint within an additional ten business days, such that the complaint is resolved within a month of having been received.

4. Documenting the Complaint

It is necessary to keep a record of any complaint that involves a dispute over money as well as any complaint that cannot be resolved on the same day that it is received. Information about such complaints must be recorded in complainants CRM file if they are a member of the organization or in a complaints file kept in the Executive Director's locked cabinet. Information recorded is to include a description of the complaint, who handled it, what was done to resolve the complaint, timeframe, and a description of the resolution.

A summary of the complaints received, including number and type, shall be reported to the agency's Board of Directors annually.

Relevant History	
Date	Notes
June 18, 2019	Complaint policy developed as per 2019's National Standards.
June 16, 2020	No Change
June 15, 2021	Update to gender neutral language