

Appeal/Grievance Policy For Persons Served



children's home + aid
celebrating 130 years of service

The goal of Children's Home + Aid is to deliver the highest quality and most appropriate services to all persons served, foster care providers, day care home providers, and others as identified.

If, at any time, you and/or your family are dissatisfied with decisions made about you or services you have received through Children's Home + Aid, and the staff member and immediate supervisor have not been able to resolve the matter, you are entitled to express that dissatisfaction through an appeal/grievance process. You may file an appeal/grievance in writing or verbally if written expression is difficult for you. The following procedures apply to the appeal/grievance process.

1. A copy of The Appeal/Grievance Policy for Persons Served will be given to you upon admission to a Children's Home + Aid program or, if you are a foster parent, at the time of licensure. The Appeal/Grievance Policy for Persons Served is part 3 of the Children's Home + Aid program Intake Packet.
 - a) The Children's Home + Aid program appeal/grievance policy and forms are also available on the agency website (www.childrenshomeandaid.org).
 - b) If you are age 12 or older, you must confirm that you have received this policy by initialing and signing the Intake Packet Signature Page.
 - c) If you are a prospective client, including a birth parent, adoptive parent, or adoptee, Children's Home + Aid program will provide you with a copy of the appeal/grievance policy prior to entering into any contract or agreement.
2. An additional copy of this policy will be given to you if you express dissatisfaction with decisions concerning you, your family or the services you have received.
3. If you are a foster parent, you should also refer to Children's Home + Aid Foster Parent Law, which includes the foster parent's rights and responsibilities. This grievance procedure is to be used by foster parents for grieving alleged violations of the Foster Parent Law that are not covered by an already existing grievance or appeal process (i.e., it cannot be used to address issues that are covered by the service appeal process, the appeal process for indicated cases of child abuse/neglect, the process for appealing licensing investigation findings or license revocations, etc.).
4. If you are a client of the Illinois Department of Children and Family Services and you are receiving services under a contract with Children's Home + Aid program, you should be aware that there is a separate IDCFS review and appeal process that applies to services IDCFS provides.
 - a) If you are a client of IDCFS, you will receive a copy of the IDCFS policy at the same time you are given the Children's Home + Aid program appeal/grievance policy.
 - b) If you are dissatisfied with decisions concerning you, your family or the services you have received, your worker will attempt to resolve the matter in a timely and informal manner at the program level. Your worker will document all informal attempts to resolve your complaint.

- c) If the matter is not resolved to your satisfaction, you must contact your worker's supervisor within 30 days of the event that led to your complaint and explain the incident.
 - d) If, after speaking with your worker's supervisor, the matter is not resolved to your satisfaction, you have an additional 14 days to prepare a written statement regarding your concerns.
 - A written statement explaining your complaint, grievance, or appeal must be provided to your worker's supervisor within 14 days of your discussion with the supervisor. If you have special needs and/or you request assistance with putting your complaint into writing, an agency staff person will be available to help you.
5. Your grievance will be reviewed within 2 business days after the supervisor has received your written complaint. The review will be conducted in a manner that protects your confidentiality.
 6. Written documentation of your grievance/complaint will be maintained by Children's Home + Aid. Copies of complaints are available to the licensing department, accrediting entities, and/or the Secretary upon request.
 7. There will be no retaliation against you for filing a grievance/complaint.
 8. Once every three months, information regarding the pattern of appeals and grievances, including any specific problematic or unresolved issues for which liability may be incurred, will be presented to the Program Committee of the Board of Trustees. The information will include how the complaints were resolved, an assessment of any discernable pattern of the complaints, and information on any changes that have been made as a result.

NOTE: There are two different sets of steps and timeframes to follow after a written complaint has been submitted: One set is for services not related to adoption (8a) and the other is for adoption services (8b).

Procedures and Timeframes - For clients filing a grievance when the grievance is NOT related to adoption services

- 8a. Within one week (seven calendar days) of receiving your written statement, the Supervisor and program Director will review your complaint and prepare a written response. Your statement and the written response will be forwarded to the appropriate Regional or Program Vice President.
 - The Regional or Program Vice-President will review the matter and may contact you in an attempt to reach a resolution within 14 calendar days of receipt of the written response.
 - If no satisfactory resolution is reached within this timeframe, your original grievance or appeal and any staff or supervisor comments will be forwarded to the Chief Operating Officer and Vice President of Quality and Performance within the next 14 calendar days.
 - You will receive a written response from the Chief Operating Officer and/or Vice President of Quality and Performance within 14 calendar days after they receive your formal grievance from the Regional Vice President.
 - If the matter has not been resolved to your satisfaction, you may, within 7 calendar days after receiving the agency's response, request a meeting with the President to present the matter. Requests must be made in writing to the Chief Operating Officer.

- The President will provide a written answer to you within 14 days of the meeting. The decision of the President will be final.
- You will be notified in writing of the resolution of the complaint. A copy of the notification will be given to the Quality Improvement Department who will forward a copy to the DCFS Licensing Office. A copy of the notification will be maintained in your record and by the Quality Improvement Department.

Procedures and Timeframes - For clients filing a grievance regarding adoption related services (In addition to the steps noted in sections 1 - 7, all grievances/complaints involving adoption related services for adoptive clients, (e.g., Adoptive Parents, Biological Parents, Adoptees) will include the following procedures.) The DCFS Adoption Hotline can also be contacted at 800-572-2390.

Children's Home + Aid's DCFS license number is 004236.

8b. If you are receiving adoption services, your written grievance will immediately be given to the management level Program Supervisor identified to accept client complaints/grievances. The Program Supervisor will immediately provide a copy of your complaint/grievance to the appropriate Program Director and Regional or Program Vice President. The Regional or Program Vice President will oversee this process.

- The grievance/complaint investigation will be completed within 10 business days after your written complaint/grievance has been received.
- Within 10 business days of the receipt of your written complaint, a written statement describing the final resolution regarding your grievance will be sent to you. The written statement will also be sent to the Chief Operating Officer, the Vice President of Quality & Performance and the DCFS Regional Licensing Representative. If extenuating circumstances exist that require additional time for resolution, you will receive an interim report within 10 business days and a final report at the conclusion of the investigation. The interim report will include the reason for the delay and an estimated date of completion of the investigation and written response. The interim report will also be sent to DCFS Licensing and will include a copy of your written complaint.
- For complaints that are time-sensitive or that involve allegations of fraud, the time period noted above may be expedited by a total of 10 days, so that the investigation and resolution will be completed in no more than 10 business days.
- Grievance/complaint resolution involving adoption clients will be reported to the Program Committee of the Board of Trustees and then the Board of Trustees at their respective next meetings. Resolutions that are reported to Boards will include copies of your written complaint and the agency's written response. The reports of complaint resolutions that are made to the Board of Trustees will be reflected in the minutes of the meetings.
- Semi-annually, a summary of complaints specific to International Adoptions will be provided to the accrediting entity and the Secretary. This summary will include the same information noted in section 8, above.