

## Commonly Asked Questions:

### Who can make a complaint using the complaints process?

- A child or youth receiving or entitled to receive services
- A family member or caregiver about their own treatment or their family member's treatment
- A foster parent complaining on behalf of their foster child
- A person acting on behalf of a child or trying to get services on behalf of a child (such as a teacher, doctor, foster family)
- A group of agencies receiving services from SCCFS other than by contract.

### Can a foster parent use the complaints process?

Foster parents are covered by special protocols, so concerns about their own care giving situation should be brought to the attention of their agency fostering contact.

### What issues can complaints be made about?

- Being treated with respect and dignity
- Fairness
- Sensitivity to a culture
- Telling you what to expect in your dealings with the agency
- Involvement in case planning and decision-making about a child in care
- Quality of agency services
- Eligibility for or access to SCCFS services, and/or
- A breach of the rights of a child in care

### Can I have help in making a formal complaint to SCCFS?

SCCFS encourages you to work with someone to support you when making a complaint. Anyone you choose - a relative, friend, doctor, or anyone else - can join you in making your complaint, or they can make the complaint for you. Also, you can ask the agency for names of people or organizations in your area that can help you.

### What is an advocate and how can an advocate help me make my complaint?

An advocate is anyone who helps you speak up and be included in the process. Sometimes a problem seems very difficult or feels overwhelming. If you feel this way, an advocate might be able to help you.

Anyone you choose can be your advocate - family, friends, or community representatives. Or, ask the agency for names and numbers of people and organizations in your area who can act as an advocate or provide support. You can also call the advocates listed below, free of cost.

### Office for Children and Youth

On February 7, 2002, Cabinet approved the Attorney General's recommendation that the Children's Commission and the Office of the Child, Youth and Family Advocate be eliminated and that an Office for Children and Youth be established to consolidate key oversight and advocacy functions.

**Main Switchboard: (250) 356-0831 (in Victoria)**  
**Toll-Free for elsewhere in BC: 1-800-476-3933**  
**Email: [ocy@gems5.gov.bc.ca](mailto:ocy@gems5.gov.bc.ca)**

### Federation of BC Youth in Care Networks

1-800-565-8055

Website: <http://www.youthincare.ca/>

## SURROUNDED BY CEDAR CHILD AND FAMILY SERVICES

#303-3995 Quadra Street  
Victoria BC V8X 1J8  
Phone: 250-383-2990  
Fax: 250-383-2509  
Email: [assistant@sccfs.com](mailto:assistant@sccfs.com)

# Complaint Process



Surrounded By Cedar  
Child and Family Services

#303-3995 Quadra Street  
Victoria BC V8X 1J8  
Phone: (250) 383-2990

## **If you don't agree with a decision or action of the Surrounded By Cedar Child and Family Services agency:**

You can make a complaint to Surrounded By Cedar Child and Family Services (SCCFS) if SCCFS has made a decision that you disagree with or think was unfair, or if you think you were treated unfairly. SCCFS will respond to complaints associated with the rights of children in care in a way that is child-centred, fair, open, accountable, accessible, timely, safe, provides for advocacy and support, and is responsive to community. SCCFS will ensure that no reprisal will occur as a result of a review requested under the Child, Family and Community Services Act, s.93(3).

## **The fastest and easiest way to try to solve a problem....**

First, you can try to work out your concerns with the SCCFS worker who made the decision you are unhappy with. Phone, fax or visit the agency office to discuss your concerns with the SCCFS worker to try to solve the problem. This is usually the quickest, easiest way to try to resolve a problem. You have every right to ask an advocate, friend or relative to accompany you to the meeting to try to work things out.

If, within 7 days, this meeting does not resolve your concerns, please contact the worker's Supervisor to request a meeting to discuss your concerns. Please ensure that your concerns, key facts and events are clear and identify possible solutions. The Supervisor will meet with you and the worker, listen and try to work out a resolution to your concerns.

## **If you still have concerns, you can make a formal complaint....**

If, after 14 days, you have not been able to resolve your concerns with the worker or Supervisor, you can ask the E.D. of Surrounded By Cedar Child and Family Services to formally review your concerns. At this meeting, please bring an advocate, put your concerns in writing, identify the key facts and events and identify possible solutions from your perspective. The E.D. and an Elder will meet with you to hear your concerns and try to resolve the issue. The worker may or may not be present at this meeting but will be involved in the resolution of the issue.

## **Once the E.D. and Elder have made a decision....**

Within 30 days from the date of your initial complaint, you will receive a letter from the E.D. telling you the decision and the reasons for it. Depending on the complaint, there are many possible outcomes, such as:

- The decision you challenged may be changed
- You may get an apology
- The agency may make changes in areas such as policy, practice, staff training or supervision, or
- The decision or action you complained about could be found to be reasonable and fair, and therefore could not be changed.

## **If you disagree with the decision made about your complaint....**

Making a complaint does not always mean that an agency decision or action will be changed to your liking, but it does mean that SCCFS will review its actions. The letter you receive will give reasons for the decision, and let you know who you can contact if you want an independent review

## **For an Independent Review:**

If you think the review decision or process has not been fair or proper, you can request an independent review. You can contact the Office of the Ombudsman for assistance at no cost.

Any decision or action that you think is unfair, contact:

**Office of the Ombudsman**

**Tel: 1-800-567-3247**

**TTY: 1-800-667-1303**

**Fax: (604) 660-1691 or**

**(250) 387-0198**