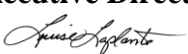


<b>COMPLAINTS and FEEDBACK</b>				
<b>Policy #:</b>	<b>Section: #3</b>	<b>Effective:</b>	<b>Revised:</b>	<b>Approved By:</b>
<b>3-20</b>	<b>Program Services, Standards and Guidelines</b>	<b>June 2012</b>	<b>May 2023</b>	<b>Executive Director</b> 

In accordance with the Quality Assurance Measures regarding Ontario Regulation 299/10 made under the Services and Supports to Promote the Social Inclusion of Persons with a Developmental Disability Act, 2008.

**PURPOSE:**

Community Living Espanola is committed to providing service in a manner that respects the rights of the individual receiving services and best utilizes available resources to meet identified needs. It is recognized that concerns and disagreements will arise as we strive to work together. When concerns and disagreements do arise, they should be handled directly by the people involved, in a timely and informal manner, to the extent that the issue and circumstances permit. However, in some situations, the nature and complexity of an issue may dictate greater care and precision in both verbal and written communications.

**POLICY STATEMENT:**

All individuals connected to Community Living Espanola must have access to a complaints and feedback procedure that ensures the fair and unbiased review of any complaint the individual may have. Dependent upon the capabilities of the individual, CLE will ensure support is provided in lodging the complaint.

**This policy applies to:**

- **An individual with developmental disability who receives services and supports from CLE**
- **A person acting on behalf of the individual with developmental disability who receives services and supports from CLE**
- **The general public**

All individuals, their families/guardians and/or persons acting on behalf of the individual, upon entering service with our agency, will receive a copy of CLE’s Complaints/Feedback policy and procedures. There will be no negative repercussions for the individual receiving services should a complaint be lodged. CLE will take all complaints seriously and review and investigate all matters but will not attempt to resolve complaints that are determined to be frivolous.

**DEFINITIONS: as per policy directive**

*“Feedback” may be positive or negative (including complaints) and is related to the services and/or supports that are provided by a service agency. Feedback may be solicited (such as information and comments collected through a satisfaction survey or a comment box) or unsolicited (such as a letter from a person or family members about the services and supports that the agency provides). Feedback may be formal (like the survey or letter noted above) or informal (such as a verbal complaint expressed to staff person).*

*“Complaint” is an expression of dissatisfaction related to the services and/or supports that are provided by a service agency. A complaint may be expressed by a person with a developmental disability who is receiving services and supports from the service agency, or a person acting on their behalf, or by the general public, regarding the services and supports that are provided by the service agency. A complaint may be made formally (such as a letter written to the agency) or informally (such as a verbal complaint expressed to staff person). A complaint does not include feedback on matters unrelated to the agency and the services and supports that it provides.*

## **SECTION I - INDIVIDUALS RECEIVING SERVICES AND PERSON(S) ACTING ON BEHALF OF THE INDIVIDUAL RECEIVING SERVICES**

Individuals receiving services and persons acting on behalf of the individual receiving services are invited to complete a satisfaction survey on an annual basis as part of the Person Centered Planning Process. Program Managers will review the satisfaction surveys and address any issues or concerns within ten (10) days of receiving the satisfaction surveys. A copy of CLE’s Complaints/Feedback policy & procedures will be provided to the individual receiving services and person(s) acting on behalf of the individual at the annual Person Centered Planning meeting. Information on CLE’s complaints procedure will also be provided in plain language to the individual receiving services.

CLE’s policy and procedures on the Prevention of Abuse and Harassment of Persons with Developmental Disabilities must be followed for any complaint involving a case of alleged, suspected or witnessed abuse.

Based on the nature of the complaint, such as if alleged abuse, a Serious Occurrence may need to be reported through the Ministry of Children, Community & Social Services’ serious occurrence reporting process and may also be required to be reported to police.

**The following procedures are to be followed should there be a complaint about the services/non-services provided by CLE:**

### ***Step 1 - Discussion with the Person with whom the Individual Receiving Services has Concern***

The individual receiving services should start with the person with whom he/she has a concern, and attempt to resolve the problem. The concern may be presented verbally or in writing with the assistance of a friend or advisor if so desired.

### ***Step 2 - Discussion with the Program Manager***

This step should be taken when the individual feels that their efforts to resolve their difficulties have not proven successful at the Step 1 stage. The Program Manager will meet with the individual within five (5) working days of being contacted. The individual may wish to bring a friend or advisor with them to the meeting.

The Program Manager will expect the individual receiving services to explain the problem as he/she sees it and to suggest solutions to the problem from his/her point of view. Within five (5) working days of having met with the Program Manager, the individual can expect a response, verbally or in written form, from the Program Manager which will either confirm an agreement established at the meeting or if no agreement is reached, detail the Program Manager’s decision regarding the complaint.

### ***Step 3 - Discussion with the Executive Director***

This step will be necessary if the individual receiving services is not satisfied with the results of the Program Manager's efforts in Step 2. The individual will communicate the complaint by telephone or letter to the Executive Director. The Executive Director will arrange a meeting time within ten (10) working days of being made aware of the complaint. The Executive Director will speak with the Program Manager prior to the meeting and review any documentation relating to the complaint to determine the steps the Program Manager has taken to resolve the complaint.

The goal of this meeting will be to look further for a solution to the complaint. Again, the individual should feel free to bring a friend or advisor with them. Within ten (10) working days of the meeting, the individual will receive, in writing, a confirmation of any agreement arrived at in the meeting with the Executive Director, or failing agreement, the Executive Director's decision regarding the complaint.

### ***Step 4 - Discussion with the Board Of Directors***

This is the step the individual receiving services may take if he/she remains dissatisfied with the resolution arrived at during the meeting with the Executive Director. At this step, the individual should direct a written complaint to the Chair of the Board of Directors, c/o CLE Administration office regarding his/her wishes to present the complaint to the Board of Directors.

Within twenty (20) working days of receiving the individual's letter, a meeting will be arranged with the Board of Directors and the Executive Director where the individual can present his/her complaint. The individual will be notified of the date, time and place of the meeting. Once again, the individual should feel free to bring a friend or advisor if so desired.

The Board Chair will have been provided with a summary of all previous activity and efforts regarding the complaint. The individual will receive a letter from the Board Chair outlining the Board of Directors' recommendations and decisions within twenty (20) working days of the meeting.

### ***Step 5 - Contact with Ministry of Children, Community and Social Services***

Should the individual remain dissatisfied subsequent to his/her efforts within the Association, the final option is to request that the Ministry of Children, Community and Social Services review the complaint. At this time, the individual will be provided with a contact name and number.

## **SECTION II - COMPLAINT PROCEDURES TO BE FOLLOWED BY THOSE PERSONS WHO ARE NOT RECEIVING SERVICES FROM CLE**

Should a person from the general public have concerns about the way Community Living Espanola is functioning, it is important that those concerns be addressed and every effort made to resolve them. Members of the general public will be provided with a copy of CLE's Complaints/Feedback policy & procedures upon request.

### ***Step 1 - Discussion with the Executive Director***

The Executive Director, upon hearing a concern from a person in the general public, may need to involve more appropriate members of staff in an effort to either clarify the concern or to work towards resolution of same. It may be necessary that a meeting in person or by telephone be arranged between the person, Program Managers and other appropriate agency staff. At the conclusion of the person's contact with the Executive Director, a written decision regarding the concern will be sent to the person within ten (10) working days of the meeting/phone contact.

### ***Step 2 - Discussion with the Board of Directors***

Should the person making the complaint be dissatisfied with the result of the problem resolution efforts of the Executive Director, the Board of Directors will meet with the person and the Executive Director within twenty (20) working days of having received the complaint. A decision, in writing, will be forthcoming within ten (10) working days of the meeting with the Board of Directors.

### ***Step 3 - Contact with Ministry of Children, Community and Social Services***

Should the complainant remain dissatisfied subsequent to CLE's efforts to resolve the issue, the complaint may be directed to the office of the Ministry of Children, Community and Social Services.

## **CONFLICT OF INTEREST**

An employee who has a conflict of interest in the situation (e.g. the complaint is specifically about that employee) will not, at any point, lead the process or be involved in the review, documentation, investigation, resolution and notification to explore the concern/complaint. The employee will not be left alone with the individual receiving services that made the complaint and if necessary, the employee will be transferred to another department where the individual does not receive services until the complaint is resolved.

## **FAIR REVIEW PROCESS**

To ensure that the review process is free from any coercion or intimidation or bias, an employee who does not work in the department where the individual receives service may be involved in the process either before, during or after the review. At any point, CLE may involve the services of an external mediator to assist in resolving the situation. CLE will notify the individual receiving services that raised the concern or complaint about the outcome of any review within 3 business days of the review being completed.

## **EVALUATION**

Community Living Espanola will conduct a review and analysis of the complaints and feedback received on an annual basis to evaluate the effectiveness of all its policies and procedures.