

## Feedback and Complaints Procedure SS-120

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| <b>APPROVAL PROCESS:</b><br>Subject Matter Expert (SME)<br>Executive Director (ED) | <b>DATE OF ORIGIN:</b> May 30, 2017<br><b>DATE OF LAST REVISION:</b> September 2025<br><b>DATE TO BE REVIEWED:</b> September 2026 |
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**Issuing Authority:** Jessica Johnston, Executive Director, Hopewell Support Services

### PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to create a transparent, caring, and responsive process for anyone who wishes to share feedback or make a complaint. This includes supported individuals, families, staff, volunteers, and members of the public. Hopewell is committed to listening, learning, and improving services through respectful, timely, and fair responses

### SCOPE

This policy applies to all feedback or complaints related to Hopewell's services, programs, or care. It includes feedback from:

- Supported individuals
- Families and caregivers
- Community members and the public
- Employees, volunteers, and students
- Other stakeholders

### GUIDING PRINCIPLES

- All feedback and complaints will be received with **respect, confidentiality, and impartiality.**
- Investigations will be **fair, unbiased, and free from retaliation.**
- Complaints will not be investigated by staff directly involved in the concern.
- Hopewell values input as part of **continuous improvement.**
- All complaints will be **acknowledged within 24 hours** whenever possible.
- Responses will be provided in **plain and accessible language.**

### HOW TO SUBMIT A COMPLAINT OR FEEDBACK

- Complaints or feedback may be submitted:
- Verbally (in person or by phone)
- In writing (letter, email, or fax)
- Through a trusted advocate or support person
- Anonymously (reviewed if enough information is provided)
- Using **accessible communication methods** (assistive devices, translation,

### Contact Options:

- Program Manager of the relevant service
- Director of Operations (Emily Shoemaker)
- Executive Director (Jessica Johnston – [jjohnston@hopewellsupport.ca](mailto:jjohnston@hopewellsupport.ca))

### Special Cases:

- Complaints involving the Executive Director: contact the **Board Chair** via the Executive Assistant (Melissa Bevcar – [mbevcar@hopewellsupport.ca](mailto:mbevcar@hopewellsupport.ca)).
- Complaints involving the Board: contact the **Executive Director**.
- Emergency complaints (e.g., abuse): see **Abuse Prevention Policy (SS-101)**.
- Serious Occurrence Reporting: see **Incident and Serious Occurrence Reporting Policy (SS-100)**.
- If a complaint remains unresolved after internal review, individuals may contact the **Ministry of Children, Community and Social Services (MCCSS)** or the **Ontario Ombudsman**.

### PROCESS

#### 1. Informal or Minor Complaints

(Examples: meal preferences, activity choices, communication style)

- Supported individuals, families, or the public may raise concerns with **frontline staff** or the **Program Coordinator**.
- Staff/Coordinator will attempt to resolve the concern promptly.
- If resolved, the issue is documented.
- If unresolved, it is escalated to the **Program Manager**.

#### 2. Formal or Larger-Scale Complaints

(Examples: disruption of services, violation of rights, health and safety issues, serious dissatisfaction with care)

- These complaints should be submitted **directly to the Program Manager**.
- **Formal complaints must be in writing** (email, letter, or form). Staff will assist supported individuals if needed.
- The Program Manager will:
  - Review the details
  - Conduct a fair investigation (ensuring impartiality)
  - Escalate to the Director of Operations or Executive Director if needed
- A response will be provided within **5 business days**.
- If timelines cannot be met, the complainant will be informed of the reason and given a revised timeline.
- If unsatisfied, the Program Manager will outline the next steps for escalation.

### 3. Escalation to Leadership

- If unresolved, the complaint may be directed to the **Director of Operations** or the **Executive Director**.
- Leadership will review the matter and provide a response within **7 business days**.
- If timelines cannot be met, the complainant will be informed with reasons and a new timeline.
- A neutral third-party mediator may be engaged at the Executive Director's discretion.

### CHILDREN'S RESPITE & SUPPORTED LIVING PROCEDURES

- Complaints are documented and shared with the Program Manager within 24 hours.
- The complainant will be acknowledged within 24 hours.
- Updates will be provided within 15 days.
- Debriefing is provided with staff, supported children, and any witnesses as appropriate.
- All involved parties are informed of the outcome and may be asked to confirm understanding

### DISTINGUISHING A PREFERENCE FROM A COMPLAINT

- **Preference:** "I don't like beans at dinner."
- **Complaint:** "I keep telling staff I don't like beans, but they continue serving them and not listening."

### DEFINITIONS

- **Formal Complaint:** A written concern about a disruption to services, violation of rights, or issue of significant impact (e.g., parent believes their child's support contradicts Hopewell values).
- **Informal Complaint:** A concern or preference that may not require a formal written process (e.g., a parent objects to a specific outing).

### POSSIBLE OUTCOMES

Complaints may result in one or more of the following:

- Clarification of misunderstanding
- Adjustments to care plans or services
- Staff training or coaching
- Program improvements or procedural changes
- Disciplinary action when appropriate

### FOLLOW UP & FEEDBACK

Complainants may be asked for feedback on:

- Timeliness of response
- Clarity of communication
- Respectfulness of the process
- Complaints are reviewed **semi-annually by the Board and Senior Leadership** to identify trends and improve services.

### DOCUMENTATION & TRACKING

- Every step will be documented and shared with the Director of Operations.
- Hopewell will maintain a **central complaints log** to track issues across programs.
- Trends will be reviewed by the Executive Director and reported to the Board twice a year.
- Written summaries of complaint reviews and resolutions will be provided upon request.
- Staff will follow all related MCCSS and internal reporting policies.

### WHISTLEBLOWER PROTECTION

Anyone making a complaint in good faith is protected from retaliation. This protection applies to individuals who report concerns, participate in investigations, or act as witnesses. False or malicious complaints may result in disciplinary action.

### REFERENCES

- Ontario Regulation 299/10 – Quality Assurance Measures
- Services and Supports to Promote the Social Inclusion of Persons with Developmental Disabilities Act, 2008

**Approved by:** Jessica Johnston, Executive Director

Signature Jessica Johnston  
Jessica Johnston

Date Sept 2, 2025.