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**POLICY**

Community Living Renfrew County South is committed to providing service in a manner which respects the individual's dignity and provides the best possible care, welfare, safety and security. Community Living Renfrew County South understands that a concern/complaint process is an important part of providing quality support that is responsive to the needs of the individual and that supports continuous improvement in service delivery.

Community Living Renfrew County South is committed to meeting the needs of the individuals supported and therefore will ensure that all individuals receiving support are aware of their right to express concerns or complaints about any Community Living Renfrew County South service or support, to have those concerns or complaints taken seriously and to seek remedy.

Community Living Renfrew County South will use the information received from individuals supported, persons acting on their behalf and the general public, through the Concern/Complaint Process, to assist in taking steps to better support individuals and/or improve agency practices.

**SCOPE OF POLICY**

This policy applies to all employees, students and volunteers of Community Living Renfrew County South.

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1. Community Living Renfrew County South will ensure that the Concern/Complaint Process Policy and Procedure is readily available and easily accessible to individuals supported, persons acting on their behalf and the general public through the following:
  - All individuals supported and their families/guardians, upon entering service with Community Living Renfrew County South, will receive a copy of the Concern/Complaint Process Policy and Procedure and Brochure.
  - All individuals supported by Community Living Renfrew County South will have the Concern/Complaint Process Policy and Procedure and Brochure explained to them in a language or manner and with a level of support that is appropriate to the capacity of the individual or with any person acting on their behalf, on an annual basis at their Individual Support Plan meeting.
  - Each Program Area will have copies of the Concern/Complaint Process Brochure posted.
  - Each year the Community Living Renfrew County South Newsletter will include a copy of the Concern/Complaint Process Brochure for all recipients.
  - The Community Living Renfrew County South website will have a copy of the Concern/Complaint Process Policy and Procedure and Brochure posted with the ability to print a copy.
  - Community Living Renfrew County South will provide a copy of the Concern/Complaint Process Policy and Procedure and Brochure to any person who requests it.
2. An individual supported, a person acting on their behalf and the general public have the right to expect whatever assistance is required to forward a concern/complaint including the right to seek outside help, have the right to have their concern/complaint taken seriously and to seek resolution.
3. Community Living Renfrew County South will ensure there will be no negative repercussions or negative impact on services and supports to any party initiating a complaint.

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4. Employees are responsible to assist an individual who receives support, a family member, or a community member who have expressed a concern/complaint in accessing the steps in the Concern/Complaint Process Policy and Procedure regardless of their level of involvement with the person. Employees are responsible to maintain confidentiality and forward the concern/complaint to a Manager in order to maintain the integrity of the process.
5. In order to avoid conflict of interest and to ensure the process is free of any intimidation or bias the Manager investigating the concern/complaint must not be involved in the concern/complaint. If the concern/complaint involves the Executive Director they will not be involved in the in process and the Human Resources Administrator will take their place. The person forwarding the concern/complaint may have a representative of their choice present and all information involved in the concern/complaint will be kept confidential.
6. Employees have the right to be informed when a concern/complaint involving them has been made and the right and responsibility to be party to its resolution.
7. Community Living Renfrew County South will comply with reporting requirements set out in the *Services and Supports to Promote the Social Inclusion of Persons with Developmental Disabilities Act, 2008* and its regulations. Where necessary Community Living Renfrew County South will ensure that a concern/complaint is:
  - Reported to the police (in the case of abuse that may constitute a criminal offence) as per the Protection from Abuse, Neglect, Mistreatment and Exploitation Policy.
  - Report to the Ministry of Community and Social Services (in the case of a serious occurrence) as per the Serious Occurrence Policy and Enhanced Serious Occurrence Policy.
8. Community Living Renfrew County South has an obligation to take information obtained through the Concern/Complaint Process Policy and Procedure and implement better services and supports by:
  - A monthly report to the Management Committee of the blinded information from the concern/complaint process.
  - An annual review (calendar year) of the information from the concern/complaint process to determine any action necessary.
  - Sharing the blinded information with the Ministry of Community and Social Services as requested through the Ministry's Risk Assessment process.

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**Concern/Complaint Resolution Steps:**

**Step 1:**

A person should attempt to resolve a concern/complaint informally with the person directly involved, when possible and appropriate. The person may present their concern/complaint verbally, in writing or with the assistance of a staff member, a family member or a friend.

***If the concern/complaint is not resolved,***

**Step 2:**

A person should complete the Concern/Complaint form on their own or with the help of someone they trust. The person should present their Concern/Complaint form to a Manager. This Manager must not be involved in the concern/complaint itself.

Within three days the Manager will meet with the person, a representative of their choice if so desired and anyone else deemed appropriate to discuss the concern/complaint, collect all the facts and attempt to resolve the concern/complaint to the person's satisfaction.

If the concern/complaint is resolved the Manager will document the resolution and forward all the information to the Executive Director. The Executive Director will maintain a confidential file of all concern/complaints. The Manager will complete the Concern/Complaint Record and place in the individual's main file.

***If the concern/complaint is not resolved,***

**Step 3:**

All documentation will be forwarded to the Executive Director for review. If the Executive Director is involved in the concern/complaint the Manager will inform the Human Resources Administrator and they will notify the President of the Board of Directors. The process would move to Step 4.

Within three days the Executive Director will meet with the person, a representative of their choice if so desired and anyone else deemed appropriate to discuss the concern/complaint and attempt to resolve the concern/complaint to the person's satisfaction.

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If the concern/complaint is resolved the Executive Director will document the resolution and place in the confidential file of all concern/complaints. The Executive Director will complete the Concern/Complaint Record and place in the individual's main file.

***If the concern/complaint is not resolved,***

Step 4:

All documentation will be forwarded to the Board of Directors for review.

Within thirty days a Board Member will arrange to meet with the person, a representative of their choice if so desired and anyone else deemed appropriate to discuss the concern/complaint and attempt to resolve the concern/complaint to the person's satisfaction.

The Board Member will make a recommendation to the Board of Directors about the concern/complaint to be discussed at the next Board of Directors Meeting.

The President of the Board of Directors will respond in writing to the person with recommendations for resolution. If the concern/complaint is resolved to the person's satisfaction the President will document the resolution and forward all information to the Executive Director. The Executive Director will maintain a confidential file of all concern/complaints. The Executive Director will complete the Concern/Complaint Record and place in the individual's main file. If the Executive Director is involved in the concern/complaint the President of the Board of Directors will complete the Concern/Complaint Record and place in the individual's main file.

***If the concern/complaint is not resolved,***

Step 5:

Arrangements will be made to have the concern/complaint reviewed by the MCSS Program Supervisor or mediated by a third party, arbitrator or ombudsman.

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**Concern/Complaint Resolution Documentation and Review:**

The Concern/Complaint Resolution documentation will be maintained by the Executive Director.

The statistical information from the Concern/Complaint Resolution documentation will be shared with the Management Committee at monthly meetings and any recommendations/actions made will be forwarded to the Quality Improvement Committee.

The annual review of information from the Concern/Complaint Resolution documentation will be shared with the Management Committee and any recommendations/actions made will be forwarded to the Quality Improvement Committee.

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