

Resolving Client Concerns or Complaints

The Sarnia-Lambton Children's Aid Society (SLCAS) aims to provide the highest quality of service to families and children. If there are concerns about our services, we want to work together with you to resolve them. We also have a formal process to review your complaints as required by the *Child, Youth and Family Services Act (CYFSA)*.

Addressing Issues before they become problems

We strive to collaborate with families, children, and other service providers in our efforts to keep children and youth safe. We encourage you to work with the service team, workers and supervisors, on an informal basis to resolve issues as they arise. It makes sense to resolve issues before they become large problems.

If you have been unable to resolve your complaint after discussing it with your worker the following procedures have been established to resolve your complaint.

You may be asked to sign a Consent to Release of Information to allow the agency to obtain or disclose information in order to resolve the matter.

Formal Complaint Process

Provide a written statement of your concerns to the worker to help clarify the issue(s). Call the

supervisor, tell them what the unresolved issue(s) are and arrange to meet with the supervisor and the worker to discuss. If you do not reach a satisfactory resolution at this meeting then complete the Internal Formal Complaint Form ([pdf](#) or [Word Format](#)) to submit it to the Internal Complaints Review Panel (ICRP). ***A printed copy of the form is available at the agency.*

The ICRP is made up of a SLCAS senior manager, a director of services, and other staff as required, who have not been directly involved in your situation, and a person who does not work for the CAS (usually a member of the CAS board of directors). The ICRP's role is to understand your concerns, find areas for resolution and identify next steps.

Your Internal Formal Complaint Form may be sent to the CAS by mail, by fax, by e-mail, or may be delivered by hand. Within seven days after SLCAS receives your written complaint, you will be notified in writing as to whether or not your complaint is eligible for review by an ICRP. If your complaint is eligible, you will also be notified of a date of a meeting with the ICRP. The meeting must take place within 14 days of the notification being sent unless you ask that it take place later. You are welcome to bring a support person to the ICRP meeting – this individual can be a family member, or friend. Additionally, you can bring a

representative from each of your bands and First Nations, Métis or Inuit communities.

Within 14 days after the meeting with the ICRP, you will be provided with a written summary of the results of the meeting, along with any agreed upon next steps. We are committed to resolving the complaint with you as quickly as possible.

Matters we can review

- Concerns about services you have sought or received from the Sarnia-Lambton Children’s Aid Society.
- Concerns about accuracy of your CAS record
- Allegations that children and their parents have not been given the opportunity to be heard when decisions affecting their interests are made by CAS.
- Allegations that CAS failed to provide reasons for a decision affecting your interests.

Matters we can’t review

- Concerns about services you have sought or received from other agencies.
- Issues that are before the Court or have been decided by the Court.
- Issues that are subject to another decision-making process under the *Child, Youth and Family Services Act* or the *Labour Relations Act*.

You may also wish to consult the [Ministry of Children and Youth Services’ brochure](#) “Do you have a complaint about services you have sought or received from an Ontario Children’s Aid Society?” which is available on the agency website, at the office, or from the Ministry.

At any time during or after the formal complaint process, you may make an application to the Child and Family Services Review Board about your

complaint. Application forms for the [Child and Family Services Review Board](#) and information about the process are available in our offices or from the Board itself:

Tel: 416-327-0111 Toll Free: 1-888-777-3616

Contact Info

Sarnia-Lambton Children’s Aid Society

161 Kendall Street, Point Edward, Ontario

N7V 4G6

Tel: 519-336-0623 Fax: 519-336-7541

www.slcas.on.ca

Please include the following information in your written complaint.

Date: _____

Worker: _____

Supervisor: _____

Child(ren): _____

Complainant: _____

Mailing Address: _____

Telephone: _____

Cell Phone: _____

Email: _____