



1.2.9 FEEDBACK, CONCERNS AND COMPLAINTS PROCESS

POLICY

CLASS is committed to fostering a respectful and inclusive environment where all people supported, families, volunteers, and community members can raise complaints, concerns, or suggestions without fear of retaliation, discrimination, or penalty.

All feedback, whether formal or informal, is welcomed and addressed fairly and promptly in keeping with our values of dignity, accountability, and inclusion.

OVERVIEW

To support this, CLASS provides various ways for anyone receiving or engaging with our services to share feedback, concerns, or complaints. We will work collaboratively with everyone to resolve issues constructively and promptly, ensuring that no person is criticized or penalized for acting in good faith.

This commitment reflects our mission to support personal journeys and our vision of an inclusive community where every voice is valued, and diversity is seen as a strength.

Note: This process is intended for all stakeholders – people supported, families, volunteers, and community members. CLASS employees should refer to Policy 3.3.3 – Complaints for Employees for internal workplace concerns.

DEFINITIONS

- **Stakeholder:** Any individual or group (such as families, volunteers, or community partners) who is directly or indirectly involved with or affected by CLASS services.
- **Person-Centered Support:** An approach that ensures the person's voice, rights, and preferences are actively honoured and upheld throughout the process.
- **Accessible Process:** A process available in multiple formats (verbal, written, visual, etc.) and supported by tools like plain language, interpreters, and communication aids.
- **Advocate/Representative:** A person (family member, support person, or formal advocate) chosen by the individual to assist or speak on their behalf during the complaint process
- **Feedback:** General comments—positive or negative—shared to improve services.\
- **Concern:** A question or issue raised that may not reflect dissatisfaction but still requires attention.



- **Informal Concern:** A concern or issue raised by a stakeholder that may be resolved collaboratively at the point of service, without requiring a formal complaint process, unless requested by the person or unable to be resolved informally.
- **Formal Complaint:** A complaint that requires a documented review and formal response, either because it could not be resolved informally or because the person has requested that it proceed through the formal complaint process.
- **Privacy Complaint:** A concern related to the handling, sharing, or protection of personal information, which is addressed under CLASS's privacy policy and applicable legislation.
- **Resolution:** The outcome or decision made in response to a complaint, concern, or feedback, including any actions taken.
- **Systemic Issue:** A recurring or widespread problem that affects multiple people or programs, indicating a need for organizational or procedural change.
- **Due Process:** A fair procedure where each complaint is reviewed respectfully, without penalty, and resolved with transparency and timeliness.
- **Timely Manner:** Within the established response timeframes outlined in the procedure (1 business day for initial acknowledgement, 5 business days for an update or resolution, and 30 business days for unresolved complaints reviewed by the Executive Director or Board).

PROCEDURE

How to Submit Feedback, Concerns, or Complaints:

People may share feedback, concerns, or formal complaints using any of the following:

People can use any of the following methods:

- **In-Person:** Speak directly to support staff, any other staff, a supervisor, program manager, privacy officer, or senior management member
- **Phone:** Call 705-435-4792 ext. 262 to leave a voice message
- **Email:** complaints@class.on.ca
- **Mail or drop off in person to:** CLASS – Attn: Complaints, 233 Church St. S., Alliston, ON L9R 2B7
- **Website:** Submit a written or voice message at www.class.on.ca/contact
- **Communication Tools:** Tool kits and supports are available in all program sites and homes.

Alternative communication formats and supports (e.g., interpreters, assistive technologies, visual tools like Proloquo2Go) are available upon request.

COMPLAINT RESOLUTION STEPS

Initial Response (One business day):

- Acknowledge receipt with the person within one business day of receiving the complaint.



- The staff member who receives the complaint will log it using the complaints email system (complaints@class.on.ca) to ensure it is tracked and followed up. They will also inform the appropriate program supervisor, program manager, or designated staff, as well as the privacy officer.

Follow-up and Resolution (Within five business days):

The program **supervisor/program manager/designated staff** will:

- Attempt to resolve the issue directly with the person.
- If unresolved, escalate the issue to the appropriate **program manager or senior director**.
- If still unresolved, the issue will be reviewed by the **chief operating officer and/or executive director**.

Final Review (If still unresolved):

- The matter may be referred to the Board of Directors for final review.
- If necessary, a neutral third party may be involved to support resolution.
- A final resolution will be provided within 30 business days.

URGENT AND SERIOUS COMPLAINTS

Complaints involving **privacy breaches, abuse, or serious occurrences** will be addressed **immediately** in accordance with CLASS's Privacy, Abuse and Serious Occurrence policies and **MCCSS regulations**. If reporting internally is not possible, people may contact the **MCCSS ReportON line** (listed in all program emergency info), the Ombudsman, or ARCH Disability Law Centre.

SUPPORT AND ADVOCACY

- People Supported may involve a family member, advocate, or representative at any stage.
- A variety of communication supports and formats are available to assist someone to share a complaint or concern (refer to the Simple Complaints Process flow chart diagram/Communication Tool kits at home/program locations).
- CLASS maintains partnerships with advocacy organizations for additional support.

EDUCATION, AWARENESS, AND REPORTING

1. Education and Awareness

- **CLASS staff** receive training on inclusive communication and complaint response during orientation and annually through the affirmation process to help educate people supported to make a complaint themselves.
- **People supported and their families** are informed of the complaints process at intake, in family newsletters, and during their annual Personal Development Plan (PDP) reviews.



- **Community and stakeholders** can access information on how to submit a complaint, provide feedback, or raise a concern at www.class.on.ca/about/policies and in community newsletter updates.

2. Reporting and Continuous Improvement

- Complaints are documented and tracked for compliance and analysis.
- Data (with names removed) is used to identify trends or systemic issues.
- Annual reporting is reviewed by the privacy officer, Human Resources, Management Team, Executive Director, and Board of Directors.

Documentation: All actions, updates, and resolutions are recorded in a secure complaints desk (maintained by the IT/Privacy Officer), and when applicable, within the locked case notes section on **ShareVision**, which can be accessed only by Management.

MEDIA AND CONFIDENTIALITY

- Only the **Executive Director or designate** may speak to the media about complaints.
- All other staff must maintain confidentiality and are not permitted to share complaint-related information publicly.

CLASS employees should refer to Policy 3.3.3 – Complaints for Employees for concerns related to internal workplace matters.