



# Resolving Client Concerns or Complaints

The Children's Aid Society of Toronto aims to provide the highest quality service to families and children. If there are concerns about our services, we want to work together with you to resolve them.

## Addressing issues before they become problems

We strive to collaborate with families, children, and other service providers in our efforts to support families and keep children and youth safe. We encourage you to work with your Workers and their Supervisors, to resolve issues as they arise. It makes sense to address issues before they become large problems.

If you have been unable to resolve issues with the Workers and Supervisors, you may contact the Branch Director at the office where you receive service for additional assistance. You may bring someone to support you during this and any future discussions, if you wish.

## Formal Complaint Process

When efforts to resolve issues at that level have not been successful, the Society has a formal complaint review mechanism. The Manager, Client Services is available to discuss this process with you and to help you access it if you wish. The process consists of a meeting with an Internal Complaints Review Panel (ICRP). The ICRP is made up of a CAST senior manager who has not been directly involved in your situation, other staff as required 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 complaint should be put in writing so that it will be clearly understood. There is a form that can be provided to you for this purpose. It may be sent to CAS by mail, by fax, by e-mail, or may be delivered by hand. Within seven days after CAST 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 be notified of a meeting date with the ICRP. The meeting must take place within 14 days of the notification being sent unless you ask that it take place later.

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 Children's Aid Society of Toronto
- Concerns about accuracy of your record with the CAS of Toronto
- Allegations that children and their parents have not been given the opportunity to participate and be in decision making about things that affect them
- Allegations that the CAS of Toronto failed to provide reasons for a decision affecting your interests.



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## Matters we can't review

- Concerns about services provided to someone other than yourself/your family.
- 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 decisionmaking process under the Child Youth and Family Services Act or the Labour Relations Act

You may also wish to consult the Ministry of Children Community and Social Services' brochure "Do you have a complaint about services you have sought or received from an Ontario Children's Aid Society?" which is available in our offices 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 at the Board are available in our offices or from the Board itself:

**Child and Family Services Review Board**  
[www.children.gov.on.ca/cs/en/boards/CFSRB](http://www.children.gov.on.ca/cs/en/boards/CFSRB)  
Tel: 416-327-4673

## The Ontario Ombudsman

An Ombudsman investigates complaints from the public about issues within the

government's administration. The Ontario Ombudsman can investigate concerns about Children's Aid Societies.

The Ombudsman's Office will attempt to resolve complaints informally and may conduct a formal investigative process. The Ombudsman cannot force agencies to change decisions or processes but can make recommendations for change and follow up with respect to progress.

The Ombudsman is identified on its website as "an office of last resort". This means that individuals are encouraged to try any available complaint or appeal mechanism before submitting a complaint to the Ombudsman.

A complaint form for the Ombudsman can be found on their website  
[www.ombudsman.on.ca](http://www.ombudsman.on.ca)

## Contact Information

For information about making a complaint, please contact your worker or

**Manager, Client Services**  
**Children's Aid Society of Toronto**  
**30 Isabella Street, Toronto ON M4Y 1N1**  
**416-924-4646**

**The Ontario Ombudsman**  
**416-325-5669, 1-800-263-2841**  
**TTY: 416-325-2648**