

COMMUNITY/PARTICIPANT COMPLAINTS POLICY	
Date Policy Approved: Nov 16, 2010	Date Policy Reviewed/Revised: April 5, 2023

Purpose:

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that College-Montrose Children's Place (CMCP) program participants, and community members are aware of the process of making a complaint about their experiences at, and with, CMCP and that any such complaint is dealt with in a fair and timely manner. The policy:

- outlines procedures to be followed when a participant or community member wishes to address a concern or complaint.
- applies to anyone using CMCP programs, services, and facilities and/or interacting with CMCP staff and volunteers in the community.
- ensures that CMCP has an accessible, transparent and non-threatening process for addressing the complaints or concerns of its participants and community.
- ensures that CMCP has a consistent values-centered approach to concerns that is rooted in the Guiding Principles of Family Support Programs.

Policy:

College-Montrose Children's Place (CMCP) recognizes that from time to time concerns may arise that need to be addressed. A concern/complaint may be defined as an expression of dissatisfaction or unmet expectation related to any aspect of CMCP's programs and services.

CMCP is committed to providing an environment in which all people join together in activities that will be conducive to their intellectual, emotional, spiritual, social and physical wellbeing while contributing to the betterment of the community.

Every effort will be made to resolve complaints in a timely fashion. When receiving any complaint, whether written or verbal, staff will listen and seek to understand the complaint and may attempt to resolve it immediately. If follow-up is required, staff will record the complainant's contact information including name, phone number and email address (if any).

Any CMCP staff member who receives a complaint will maintain confidentiality by not discussing allegations with other individuals, except on a "need to know" basis.

Complaints Procedures

- Participants and community members have the right to provide feedback about their experience at CMCP without fear of interference, coercion, discrimination or reprisal.
- Feedback can be about anything including but not limited to: a service, a program, a person, or the physical environment, etc.
- Participants and community members may request interpretation or translation if needed and CMCP will make every effort to accommodate, where possible.
- Any individual who has a complaint filed against them has the right to be informed of the allegations and the right to respond.
- The resolution of the complaint should be timely so as not to delay appropriate action for the complainant or cause undue stress for any individual involved.
- All complaints will be treated confidentially unless laws otherwise request informing appropriate authorities.

Informal Complaint

Complainants are encouraged to speak with a staff about a concern. In most cases, raising an issue with a lead staff will resolve the matter. You may do this either in person, by phone or by email. Staff are involved in handling concerns as they arise and will escalate if the situation remains unresolved.

1. Informal Complaints Procedure

- All staff and volunteers who become aware of a concern or complaint should ensure that individuals with a complaint are made aware of the Community/Participant Complaints Policy.
- Individuals with a complaint are encouraged to discuss their concerns directly with the other person(s) involved, as many issues can be successfully resolved in this way.
- Staff and volunteers are expected to work with Complainant to achieve a

positive resolution where possible in line with organizational policy. Staff and volunteers may decide to involve or consult their supervisor at any stage.

- If discussion of the concern/complaint is not possible or has already been attempted without a satisfactory resolution, the staff or volunteer will refer the Complainant to the lead staff of the site where the incident occurred or where the concern applies. If the Complainant chooses to elevate the complaint to the lead staff, this individual will follow-up with the Complainant to review the complaint details.
- The designated staff in charge will talk with **all** the individual(s) involved and attempt to find a resolution acceptable to all parties. Any action/decisions made at this point will be communicated to the parties concerned.
- CMCP believes most concerns/complaints can be resolved through informal conversation and negotiation. However, if any person involved or named in the complaint is not satisfied with the resulting action/decisions they may make a formal complaint.

2. Formal Complaint Procedure

Formal Complaint

If a complaint is not resolved informally, the Complainant may make a formal complaint in writing (by mail or email) to:

- In the cases where the concern is about any staff, volunteer, program or facility, individuals may start a formal complaint or feedback process in person, by telephone, by letter, or by electronic communication to the Executive Director.
- If the complaint is received verbally the Executive Director will make detailed notes of the complaint.
- In the case where the complaint is against personnel associated with CMCP, the Executive Director will inform that individual where appropriate. Confidentiality issues must always be considered when information is shared.
- The Executive Director will contact the CMCP personnel associated and seek any necessary consultation. The Executive Director will attempt to resolve the

concern with the complainant within 1 week.

- In cases where the complainant is still not satisfied with the outcome, they may elevate their complaint to the Chair of the CMCP Board of Directors.
- In the case where the Executive Director is named in the complaint, the Complainant should address their concern to the Chair of the Board.
- The Chair of the Board will work with the Executive Committee of the Board of Directors to resolve the complaint or address the concern. They will:
 - Review any documents necessary.
 - Notify all persons involved or named in the complaint
 - Ask for comments from all persons involved or named in the complaint.
- If the Executive Committee decides they are unable to resolve the complaint, they may strike a board committee and/or solicit the assistance of an external resource to review the case as an impartial advisor.
- The Executive Committee of the Board of Directors will attempt to resolve the concern with the complainant within 1 week.
- For contact information call CMCP administrative offices at 416-532-9485 ext. 225 or visit CMCP head office at 180 Shaw St, Lower Level, Toronto M6J 2W5.
- All complaints will be dealt with in a timely manner while considering the seriousness of the complaint, impact of the issue on community/individual, and organizational resources and the time required to adequately investigate the complaint.
- After reviewing the complaint CMCP may respond in any of the following ways:
 - Providing an explanation
 - Changing a decision, policy or practice
 - Confirming an existing decision and explaining why it was reached
 - Providing additional training
 - A variety of other ways depending on the nature of the complaint.

Documentation

- CMCP will maintain a complaint tracking system for all formal complaints. A form will be filled out when complaints are received.
- It will identify the nature of the complaint and track follow-up actions taken to

resolve the complaint.

- The Executive Director or their designates will maintain and review these forms.
- The Director will include a summary of the nature of these complaints and actions taken in their regular reports to the board at least once a year.

Accountabilities, evaluation, feedback and revisions to policy

- All members of CMCP including board, staff, and volunteers will be asked to take responsibility for keeping informed of this policy and ensuring its procedures are followed.
- An updated Complaints policy and procedures document will be maintained in the Policy Manual of CMCP.
- The Executive Director, with the help of the Program Committee, will be responsible for ensuring this policy is implemented, reviewed and evaluated.
- The Executive Director will be responsible for ensuring the Policy and Procedures manual is updated as the board approves revisions.
- The Board of Directors will review and revise the Community/Participant Complaints Policy and Procedures on recommendations from the Executive Director.
- Employees will be encouraged to give feedback on policies and procedures in written form to their Managers on an ongoing basis.
- Policies will be reviewed and evaluated at staff meetings annually.
- Regular workshops will be given on various aspects of policy and procedures to participants, staff, volunteers and board as required.