

Macaulay Centres for Children
Policy and Procedure Manual

Subject: Complaints and Feedback Policy for Service Users and Community Members
Programs: All Programs and Departments
Date approved: September 14, 2011; November 12, 2014; November 8, 2017, June 25, 2019;
December 13, 2023

Policy

Macaulay is committed to providing high quality and accessible programs and services. If service users (including parents) or community members are not satisfied with Macaulay service, personnel or policies, they have the right to give Macaulay that feedback or to complain. Macaulay welcomes all feedback and considers the feedback carefully in order to continually improve our service and organization.

Macaulay addresses complaints in a manner that respects the rights of everyone involved. All complaints are investigated and resolved in a manner that strives to be timely, objective and respectful.

Macaulay deals with complaints confidentially, unless otherwise required by law. Nevertheless, respondents are generally given the name of the complainant unless advised otherwise by legal counsel. All complainants, respondents and other persons involved with the complaint process have a responsibility to ensure that matters remain confidential.

Community members and service users are asked to provide their complaint in writing in order that the complaint can be fully and fairly investigated. Anonymous complaints are investigated based on the information available. Should Macaulay become aware of a complaint on social media/online, it is addressed through this policy. Every effort is made to resolve complaints as quickly as possible.

Individuals, who believe they have been unjustly treated, harassed or discriminated against, in a way that violates the Human Rights Code, have the right to seek assistance from the Ontario Human Rights Commission (<https://www.ohrc.on.ca/en>).

Definitions:

Feedback Positive or negative comments about Macaulay service, personnel or policies.

Complaint A *serious* concern, typically expressed in writing, about a policy, procedure, practice or person working or volunteering at Macaulay. A complaint differs from feedback in that the complainant is seeking a formal process and response. Any

concern that could result in discipline to an employee or volunteer must be considered a complaint.

Complainant The person who makes the complaint.

Respondent The person against whom the complaint is made.

Reprisal Any harassment, intimidation, threats, retaliation, and or discipline against a person (e.g., complainant, respondent, witness or investigator) for their participation, or assumed participation, in the investigation.

Note: *Not all complaints will be directed towards an individual. In this case, the respondent is the program supervisor or manager.*

Complaint Resolution Procedure

Macaulay will:

- Make service users and community members aware of this Policy.
- Require that no one involved in the complaints resolution procedure has a real or perceived conflict of interest as per the Macaulay Conflict of Interest Policy.
- Make reasonable accommodation to make sure the Complaints Resolution process is accessible to all concerned.
- Make a final decision to resolve the complaint.
- Inform the complainant about the final decision, with accompanying reasons, within a reasonable period. If the complainant is not satisfied, inform the complainant of the appeal procedure available.
- If there is a specific respondent, Macaulay informs the respondent of the final decision; the resolution may include discipline and/or some further action or training requirement.
- File written records of the complaint in a locked cabinet.

Complaint Resolution Steps

1. The complainant makes the complaint to a Macaulay staff; preferably directly to the immediate Program Supervisor. Complaints received by staff report the complaint to their Program Supervisor or any other member of management. Complaints received by staff about their Program Supervisor should be reported to their supervisor. The complainant is asked to put the complaint in writing and to include their contact information. If the complainant has difficulty putting the complaint in writing, assistance will be provided.
2. The supervisor informs their immediate supervisor or Program Director immediately upon receipt of the complaint. Complaints on social media/online should also be reported to the Director of Communications and Strategic Partnerships.

3. If the complaint comes under one of the following categories, those policies will apply:
 - Complaints and Feedback for Service Users and Community Members
 - Diversity, Equity and Inclusion and the Procedure for Handling Human Rights Complaints
 - Occupational Health and Safety
 - Reporting Child Abuse and Neglect
 - Serious Occurrence
 - Workplace Harassment and Sexual Harassment
 - Workplace Violence
4. Complaints are investigated using the Investigation Protocol.
5. The supervisor receiving the complaint contacts the complainant within 2 business days and arranges a meeting to review the details and to discuss the possible resolution. Whenever possible, this latter step is done through a face to face meeting. If the nature of the complaint warrants, the Program Director or Chief Executive Officer may attend the meeting.
6. Once all the details of the complaint are received from the complainant, including the complainant's suggested resolution, the supervisor proceeds to investigate the complaint using the Investigation Protocol. If the complaint is about an agency policy, procedure, or practice, this step must involve the appropriate Program Manager or Director. Where the complaint or the resolution may involve legal, financial or public relations liabilities, the final decision concerning the resolution is made by the Director. The Director informs the Chief Executive Officer who informs the Chair or the Board, as needed.
7. Online complaints or feedback are responded to or addressed by the Director of Communications and Strategic Partnerships.

Appeal Process

Should a complainant not be satisfied with the complaint resolution, the complainant is advised that they can appeal the decision to the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) within ten (10) working days of receiving the complaint resolution. The decision reached by the CEO is final.

The grounds for review are:

- investigation was not completed in accordance with these procedures
- new information and or evidence becomes known

Complaints may be directed to the attention of the Chair of the Board of Directors *only* if the complaint is about the CEO, or if the CEO has an actual or perceived conflict of interest in the complaint resolution.

Individuals, who believe they have been unjustly treated, harassed or discriminated against, in

a way that violates the Human Rights Code, have the right to seek assistance from the Ontario Human Rights Commission.

Assurance Against Reprisal

No complainant is penalized or subject to any prejudicial treatment if they made a complaint in good faith.

Reprisal for participation in the investigation process is prohibited. Macaulay will take all reasonable steps to protect those who participated, or are believed to have participated, in the investigation process from reprisal or retaliation.

Cross References

Complaints Policy for Staff, Students and Volunteers

Diversity, Equity and Inclusion and the Procedure for Handling Human Rights Complaints

Investigations Protocol

Occupational Health and Safety

Privacy and Confidentiality

Reporting Child Abuse and Neglect

Serious Occurrence

Social Media and Online Content

Whistleblower Protection

Workplace Harassment and Sexual Harassment

Workplace Violence