

<b>NeighborImpact Policy &amp; Procedure</b>	
Title: Community & Client Complaints	Original Date: 1-15-08 Revision Date and #:
Approval Date: 1-15-08	PC Approval: 1-15-08
Related Documents: Written Concern Form, Documentation of Community & Client Complaints	

**Policy:** The NeighborImpact Board of Directors and the Head Start Policy Council will establish and maintain procedures for working to resolve community complaints about the programs.

**Purpose:** It is the desire of NeighborImpact to encourage communication between parents, clients, community members and staff. It is important that individuals know the procedure for expressing concerns or dealing with complaints about programs so that questions, concerns, ideas and problems can be dealt with in a positive manner. Below is a step-by-step outline of the procedure for expressing concerns or working through complaints about programs. (Some individual programs have appeal procedures for denial and termination of services. Clients will be provided with such procedures as appropriate.)

**Procedure:**

Informal

- A. Clients/parents/community members are encouraged to express their concerns directly to the individual staff member.
- B. If the concern does not involve an individual staff member, the concern may be directed to the appropriate supervisor.
- C. Every attempt is made to handle the situation respectfully and directly with confidentiality.

Formal

Step 1.

- A. If concern is not resolved through the informal process, the individual may file a formal concern using the "Written Concern Form".
- B. A "Written Concern Form" may be obtained at any NeighborImpact location, via the NeighborImpact Intranet page or at the Administration Office, 548-2380 ext. 100.
- C. The form is completed by the concerned individual. Staff members can assist with completion of the form for non-personnel concerns. Concerns regarding personnel must be directed to the person's supervisor.
- D. The completed form can be given to any staff member who then gives it to the coordinator/supervisor.

Step 2.

- A. The Supervisor contacts the individual and tries to resolve **program** concerns over the phone. **(If the concern is a personnel issue, the Supervisor confirms they have received the concern and will review it. If the individual has future concerns regarding the staff member they may submit their concern to the next supervisory level for review.)**
- B. If the concern is not resolved over the phone, the supervisor contacts the individual schedules a meeting within 5 working days if possible to discuss the situation.
- C. The staff member(if applicable) and Supervisor attends the meeting, the concerned individual does not have to attend the meeting if they do not wish to.
- D. The goal of the meeting is to bring resolution to the concern or complaint by reaching consensus in a positive manner about:
  - the most appropriate form of action to take,

- what the implementation of that action would look like,
- by whom the action should be taken, and
- by when the action should be completed.

E. The Supervisor prepares a written response within three days of the meeting and sends the response by certified mail to the individual who filed the concern.

Step 3.

A. If the concerned individual does not feel the issue has been resolved, they may bring it to the next supervisory level. The process outlined in #2 continues until it reaches the Program Director.

Step 4.

A. If a concern reaches the Program Director, the Director reviews the concern and schedules a meeting. The following individuals may be invited to a meeting: person filing the concern (if they feel comfortable), individual staff person addressed in the concern, and appropriate supervisor. If the concern is regarding the Head Start program, the Head Start Policy Council Chairperson and/or Representative (as applicable) may be invited to attend. The Head Start Policy Council Chair is also informed of all concerns reaching this level.

B. The Director prepares a written response outlining action taken and mails it certified mail to the individual who filed the grievance within fifteen (15) working days of the meeting/decision. The Director's response is final.