

# Client Complaints Procedure

## Introduction

Family Services, Inc. DBA Origin SC (Origin) ensures that there is a fair process for handling complaints that may arise as a result of work performed by our staff. Our goal is to provide an efficient, clear, non-threatening, fair and accessible mechanism for handling complaints if they arise.

The procedures for investigation and record keeping are clear:

- No person making a complaint will be victimized or retaliated against for making a complaint.

## Limits to procedure

The Client Complaints Procedure **does not** apply to concerns which members or Directors have in regard to decisions made by the Board. The appropriate mechanism for dealing with these concerns is that they be raised at a subsequent Board meeting.

## Procedure in resolving a complaint

### **1. Complaint is made**

The complaint shall be made in writing, marked confidential, and addressed to the Chief Executive Officer, Caprice Atterbury, 843-735-7808 [catterbury@originsc.org](mailto:catterbury@originsc.org), the CFO Susan Todd, 843-735-7812 [stodd@originsc.org](mailto:stodd@originsc.org), or the CCO Stephanie Reed, 843-735-7810 [sreed@originsc.org](mailto:sreed@originsc.org). The Chief Executive Officer, CFO, or CCO shall acknowledge the complaint in writing within five (5) business days of receiving the complaint.

### **2. Preliminary advice to the complainant**

The Chief Executive Officer (or nominee) shall respond to the complainant by sensitively and carefully analyze the complaint, explaining the options available and helping the complainant decide if they want to proceed to an informal conciliatory or formal internal investigation process as outlined in Option 1 and Option 2 below.

#### **Option 1 - Resolution between the parties through conciliation**

If the person chooses to seek resolution through an internal conciliation process then the following steps are appropriate:

1. The complainant may approach the other party directly or ask the Chief Executive Officer (or nominee) to approach the other person or persons on their behalf. If a third party is to be involved in resolution, it is recommended that a trained conciliator be involved to assist the parties.
2. If the other person or persons admit to the behavior or the acts complained about, and an agreement between the parties is reached, the complaint is resolved.
3. Even if the person does not admit to the behavior or acts complained about, the parties may be able to agree to an outcome that is acceptable to the complainant and the other parties.
4. If an acceptable outcome is reached the Chief Executive Officer (or nominee) will be responsible for ensuring that the appropriate people who need to know about the outcome are appropriately informed so that the outcome is implemented and followed. As matters handled this way are usually minor, resolution would generally include an apology and agreement not to repeat the behavior or actions complained about.

## **Option 2 - Resolution through an internal investigation**

If the complainant chooses to seek resolution through the internal and formal investigation process the following steps will be followed.

1. The investigator will interview the complainant and the allegations will be particularized in writing. During this interview and in any consequent stages of the process an appropriate support person may support the complainant.
2. The investigator will present the allegations in full to the other party or parties.
3. If there are any disputes over facts, the investigator will interview any witnesses and gather evidence that will assist in making a finding, and gather any other relevant evidence that will assist in making a finding. Based on the facts of the matter the investigator will make a finding whether the complaint has substance.
4. A report documenting the investigation process, the evidence, the findings and a recommended outcome will be made to the Chief Executive Officer (or nominee). The Chief Executive Officer (or Nominee) will assess the report and implement appropriate action based on his or her analysis of the investigation's recommended outcomes
5. The Chief Executive Officer (or nominee) will advise in writing the direct parties to the complaint and any other relevant parties of their decision.

### ***Key Elements in Resolving a Complaint***

The following are key elements in resolving a complaint:

- All parties have the right to have any complaint addressed.
- Any complaint can be addressed by either the formal or informal options under this procedure.
- There is a guarantee of timeliness, confidentiality and objectivity when an issue is raised.
- The principles of natural justice will be given to both the person making the complaint and the person or persons who are subject of the complaint.