



Naag-gu-chich-chi-gaa-win Internal Complaint Review Process

TERMS OF REFERENCE

Naag-gu-chich-chi-gaa-win is an Anishinaabe word which translated means to carefully consider, oversee and determine circumstances. It refers to a respectful process of examination which determines the direction or an outcome to concerns being raised. The Naag-gu-chich-chi-gaa-win Committee has been established to provide direction or determine an outcome by overseeing the process in hearing complaints that are brought forward to the Committee by children and families receiving services from Weechi-it-te-win Family Services and its ten affiliate First Nations.

The Naag-gu-chich-chi-gaa-win Committee honours its sacred responsibility of ensuring the safety and care of our children and families remains at the heart of Anishinaabe customary practice.

PURPOSE

The Naag-gu-chich-chi-gaa-win Committee will assist with the fair and expeditious resolution of complaints in an impartial, confidential and independent manner. The powers of the Naag-gu-chich-chi-gaa-win Committee will include overseeing the grievance process and determining dispute resolution upon receipt of complaints from children and their families receiving services from Weechi-it-te-win Family Services.

Please note that the Internal Complaint and Review Process will not be used for issues which are currently before the court or matters that are subject to another decision-making process.

OPERATING GUIDELINES OF THE COMMITTEE

A. COMPOSITION:

The Naag-gu-chich-chi-gaa-win Committee shall be made up of no less than four Committee members.

B. COMMITTEE MEMBERS shall include:

- (i) Elder from the Weechi-it-te-win Family Services Elders Council,
- (ii) Board Member;
- (iii) Executive Director;
- (iv) Human Resource Manager;
- (v) Cultural Coordinator to organize and coordinate resources for the Anishinaabe Dispute Resolution process, as may be required; and,
- (vi) Members as may be determined by the Executive Director.

In circumstances whereby a Committee Member has direct involvement or may be considered a conflict of interest, the Committee Member will remove themselves from the process.

RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE COMMITTEE

The Naag-gu-chich-chi-gaa-win Committee shall be responsible for:

1. Conducting a review of the complaints referred to the Committee by the Quality Assurance Specialist;
2. Hearing and settling complaints referred for consideration;
3. Providing assistance with resolving complaints through discussion and exploring available options including Anishinaabe Dispute Resolution processes;
4. Identify trends and patterns in complaints to identify and make recommendations to address potential systemic issues and seek improvements to influence positive changes;
5. Performs other duties as assigned by resolution of the Board of Directors from time to time.

INTERNAL REVIEW PROCESS

To initiate a review of a complaint or concern, it must be received in writing by the Quality Assurance Specialist or in the case of a conflict of interest, an alternate of the Agency will be designated by the Executive Director, and the complaint or concern should include:

- (i) the nature of the complaint or disagreement;
- (ii) date(s);
- (iii) who is affected and how;
- (iv) possible solution;
- (v) name and contact information of the complainant.

A “complaint” may include any issue concerning the services provided to children and families from Weechi-it-te-win Family Services.

A complaint shall be resolved by using the following process:

1. Immediately upon receipt of the written complaint, it shall be referred to the Quality Assurance Specialist to assess the merits of the complaint and make a determination on a referral to the Naag-gu-chich-chi-gaa-win Committee;
2. Within seven (7) days of Weechi-it-te-win Family Services receipt of a written complaint, correspondence will be sent by the Quality Assurance Specialist to the complainant which will outline a determination of eligibility for review of the complaint by the Naag-gu-chich-chi-gaa-win Committee;

3. If a complaint is determined to be eligible for review by the Naag-gu-chichi-chi-gaa-win Committee, the response will include the date, time and location for a meeting with the Committee. The meeting shall be held within fourteen (14) days after the date the written notice is sent to the complainant or at such later time as may be requested by the complainant. An internal review and investigation will take place after the date the written notice is sent to the complainant;
4. The Naa-gu-chichi-chi-gaa Committee members shall make every reasonable effort to accommodate a request by the complainant to schedule the meeting at a later time as may be mutually convenient for the complainant and Naa-gu-chichi-gaa Committee members;
5. The complainant shall be permitted to bring a representative, as may be required;
6. Within fourteen (14) days after the Naa-gu-chichi-chi-gaa Committee meeting date, a written summary on the outcome of the meeting including any agreed upon action plan or next steps will be provided to the Executive Director and complainant;
7. If the complaint is related to a service not being provided by a member of a Customary Care team then the concern would be referred to the First Nation for immediate action. The internal review process as set out by the First Nation would be adhered to. The First Nation would be required to provide documentation as follow-up which outlines the response of the First Nation to the concern within ten (10) business days. In the event that the concern remains unresolved by the First Nation within this period, then the complainant may access the complaint process of Weechi-it-te-win Family Services;
8. Utilization of Anishinaabe protocols including the eagle feather, four medicines (tobacco, sage, sweet grass and cedar), elder and Maango Inini may be included in the process, as may be required.
9. The decisions of the Agency, once it has completed the Internal Review Process, are deemed final.