

Monitoring Appendix G

Complaint Policy Guidelines

- ◆ Receipt of the complaint: Policy identifies to whom the complaint is made and in what form - in writing, in person, by telephone, or electronically.
- ◆ Complaint information: Staff obtains as much relevant information as possible from the complainant; develop a form for consistency.
- ◆ Screening complaints: Staff accepts a complaint for investigation when it alleges:
 - non-compliance with written licensing standards, and/or
 - abuse or neglect of a child in care.
- ◆ Assessing complaint risk: Policy identifies response timeframes based on degree of harm or risk to children in care. For example, if a child is in imminent risk of serious physical harm, you would respond immediately or at least within 24 hours of receiving the complaint. In the case of a lesser risk, such as use of too much TV or milk not being served one day, you might go within a one month time frame.
- ◆ The investigation: Staff conducts a full investigation, obtaining sufficient information to make a finding. In most cases, this investigation would include a site visit.
- ◆ Child abuse and neglect: Upon receipt of a complaint alleging abuse or neglect of a child in care, staff immediately makes a referral to the Child Protection agency responsible for investigation in your community.
- ◆ Findings: After the investigation is completed, the staff, in consultation with their supervisor, makes a finding as to whether the complaint is substantiated, unsubstantiated, or ruled out. (suggested terms)
 - Substantiated - findings of the investigation clearly indicate the facility violated one or more licensing standards.
 - Unsubstantiated - findings of the investigation do not lead to a definite conclusion.
 - Ruled out - findings of the investigation clearly indicate that there was not a violation of any licensing standards.
- ◆ Documentation: Upon completion of the investigation, staff documents the findings and notifies the provider of the allegations and findings by sending a letter with a summary. Documents become a part of the provider's case file with attention paid to confidentiality.
- ◆ Notice to Comply: When a complaint allegation has been substantiated, staff advises the facility to correct the violations immediately and requests the facility to send a plan of correction.

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