



Policy Type:	<b>Human Resources</b>	Date Approved:	<b>October 1, 2009</b>
Policy #	418.1	Last Updated:	January 2024
Policy Title:	<b>Complaints, Grievances &amp; Appeals for External Stakeholders and General Public</b>	Next Review Date:	<b>March 2024</b>

## Policy

**The Network is committed to promoting a professional and collaborative culture by ensuring that any external stakeholders and members of the general public have the opportunity to voice and resolve their issues, complaints and grievances in a fair and prompt manner.**

## Procedures

### 1. Awareness

External stakeholders and members of the general public will be directed to and have access to this policy via our website receiving information on the procedures available to them to file a complaint, grievance or appeal.  
 Complaint Procedure

- a. All individuals are encouraged, wherever possible, to discuss and resolve concerns or difficulties directly with the person(s) concerned. This is the informal stage of the grievance process.
- b. External Stakeholders and members of the general public may bypass direct lines of communication and go directly to the Executive Director if they feel that approaching the employee/volunteer involved is not in their best interest.
- c. In the event that an External stakeholder or member of the general public is dissatisfied with the outcome of the Complaint Procedure with the Executive Director they may submit the concern in writing to the Board Chair which initiates the grievance procedure.



## 2. Overview of the Grievance

Procedure In the event of a formal grievance:

- a. The complainant will be given the opportunity to present their case;
- b. All matters arising shall be accurately documented and recorded. Records shall be maintained for a minimum period of ten (10) years and treated as confidential in accordance with the Network's policy on information privacy;
- c. A written statement of the outcomes will be issued at each stage of the process giving due reasons for decisions reached;
- d. The complainant will have the right to have a representative present who may be a relative, friend or colleague, but not a legal representative, during any negotiations with the Network or its representatives;
- e. The complainant will not be required to meet any costs associated with lodging a grievance, provided the procedures contained herein are adhered to;
- f. The complainant shall not be subject to discrimination, victimization or any other form of harassment as a result of actions taken under these guidelines.

## 2. Steps in the Grievance Process

### a. Procedural Protocols

- i. The External Stakeholder or member of the general public may withdraw their request for grievance at any time prior to the grievance meeting.
- ii. In the event that the complainant has a grievance regarding the Executive Director, the employee will submit their grievance directly to the Chairperson of the Leadership Team.
- iii. An External Stakeholder or member of the general public may request a support person be present when they are presenting their case for grievances or appeals. The support person is required to sign an Oath of Confidentiality.
- iv. Minutes will be taken by that outline the nature of the Grievance, the



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action taken, and the outcome. All parties are to sign the minutes.

01. The minutes are then placed in each related Employee's Personnel file with a copy given to the External Stakeholder or member of the general public.

#### 4. Appeal Procedure

- a. Appeals to Grievances must be made in writing, and are forwarded to the FASD portfolio holder of the Ministry of Seniors, Community and Social Services who will initiate their own Alberta government complaints procedures.

#### 5. Supports

- a. Regardless of the outcome of a complaint made in good faith, the External Stakeholder or member of the general public lodging the complaint, as well as anyone providing information will be protected from any form of retaliation by any employee or volunteer of NWCFASD Network.
- b. In all situations of alleged wrongdoing, the complainant and accused will be supported through the complaint, grievance and appeal process.

#### 6. Confidentiality

All parties shall keep complaints, grievances, and appeals strictly confidential. Violation of confidentiality is a performance issue and may be subject to disciplinary action. Any retaliation for filing a Grievance or Appeal is also an offence and subject to disciplinary action.

#### 7. Documentation

- a. A record of outcomes for all formal Grievances and Appeals shall be sent to the Employees involved.
- b. A copy of the outcomes will be maintained on the Employees' files.

Background information used to determine the outcomes, will be sealed and kept by the Executive Director at the Network office. The sealed information will be kept in accordance with the Personal Records Policy.