

S-105 CUSTOMER COMPLAINTS



For the sake of brevity, the masculine gender is used for all persons.

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(previously DG-08)

Policy

Valoris employees are committed to providing customers with quality services that respect their rights as guaranteed by laws, regulations and policies. These rights include, among others:

- Easy and timely access to services for which they are eligible;
- To participate in, and be informed of, decisions that affect them;
- Have the opportunity to give informed consent to receive services;
- Receive services in the official language of their choice;
- Obtain access to their file in accordance with applicable laws and regulations;
- To be assured of confidentiality and their personal information;
- Have the opportunity to lodge a complaint and have access to information concerning the complaint examination procedure;
- To be represented, if necessary, by a legal counsel or other authorized person;
- To be treated with courtesy, fairness, justice, understanding and respect for their dignity and needs;
- To receive services in an appropriate environment.

If a person is dissatisfied with the interactions or services he or she has received at Valoris, he or she has the right to freely express his or her opinion and criticism by addressing the appropriate persons. Complaints may be made without any direct or indirect reprisal. Valoris is committed to taking customer complaints seriously and take it as an opportunity to improve its services.

Staff will respond to complaints, concerns or disagreements from customers or others in the community according to the steps set out in this procedure. This policy will be evaluated in writing at least once every 12 months to assess both:

- a) its effectiveness;
- b) the need for changes to improve its effectiveness.

In the case of a child welfare service, a copy of this policy, as well as brochures from the Child and Family Services Review Board (CFSRB), hereinafter referred to as the Board, may be given to the person for information. The complainant may choose to present the complaint directly to the Board under section 19 of the Child, Youth and Family Services Act, 2017 (CYFSA). He or she may also submit the complaint to the Commission at any stage of the internal complaint procedure.

Procedure

1. Who can file a complaint?

Any person who has applied for services for which he or she is eligible, or who is actively receiving or has received services from Valoris, and who is dissatisfied with the quality of interactions or services, may file a complaint, which will be handled in accordance with this policy.

2. How can a complaint be made?

1.1 A complaint may be made by telephone, letter, fax, e-mail or in person to one of our employees or representatives.

1.2 A complaint may be directed to any department or individual working on behalf of Valoris, regardless of position. The complaint will then be directed to the appropriate person in accordance with the procedure set out below.

1.3 In the case of children or youth under the care of Valoris, a complaint regarding a violation of their rights may be communicated to a foster parent, Valoris employee, or other Valoris representative.

3. Receiving and processing complaints

1. Customers are invited to express their complaint directly to the person concerned. In cases where customers do not feel comfortable speaking directly to the person concerned, the complaint should be directed to the immediate superior of the person concerned by the person receiving the complaint. In the case of a complaint about a service that does not concern the actions of a particular individual, the complaint should be directed to the member of the leadership team most directly responsible for the service affected by the complaint.
2. The person receiving the complaint is responsible for acknowledging receipt of the complaint to the complainant no later than 24 hours after receipt. This should be recorded in the complainant's file if the complainant has an active file with Valoris.
 - i. In the case of children or young people in care who complain of a potential infringement of their rights, the responsible person should also determine whether immediate action needs to be taken in response to the complaint, as well as any supports the complainant may require to participate in the complaint resolution process.
3. Within five (5) working days of receipt, each complaint must be examined by the person receiving it to assess its admissibility. The admissibility analysis consists of a preliminary assessment of the alleged situation to evaluate whether:

- i. The person lodging the complaint is eligible to do so;
 - ii. The alleged facts present a sufficient appearance of plausibility to justify undertaking a full investigation;
 - iii. This preliminary analysis makes it possible to quickly contain frivolous complaints or those that have no chance of being upheld, and to take the appropriate decisions to manage the situation.
4. Any admissible complaint deemed serious or reported to the media is immediately reported to the Director most responsible for the department concerned by the complaint. The General Manager must be notified if there is any possibility of a customer complaint being reported to the media, and must inform the Board of Directors if this is the case. Some serious complaints also require the reporting of a serious occurrence to the appropriate department.
5. At the end of the five (5) working days, the person who assessed the admissibility of the complaint must inform the complainant of his or her decision and the next steps, if any. If an investigation is necessary, it must begin no later than five (5) working days following receipt of the complaint and may be spread over thirty (30) days. All decisions and steps are recorded in the customer's file.
 - i. The person who confirms the admissibility of the complaint to the customer must also document it in the central customer complaints directory, using the form available for this purpose on the Intranet.
6. In the event that an investigation process is initiated, at least every fifteen (15) days following receipt of the complaint, the complainant shall receive an update on the service provider's review of the complaint, and thereafter at intervals not exceeding 15 days.
7. The final results of the investigation will be shared with the complainant within five (5) business days of the completion of the investigation.
8. In the case of complaints from children or young people under care, care will be taken to complete the debriefing stages in accordance with the stipulations and timetables contained in the appendix to this policy.

4. Complaints resolution

1. As stipulated in 3.8, the conclusion of the complaint will be shared in writing either by letter or secure email to the complainant informing them of the outcome.
2. If the complainant is dissatisfied with the outcome of the complaint, the complaint will be brought to the attention of the member of management most responsible of that department or the person against whom the complaint has been made in an attempt to find a resolution.

3. In circumstances where the complainant remains dissatisfied following the intervention of a member of management, he/she will be reminded of the option of appealing to the internal complaints review committee and asked if he/she wishes to do so.
4. The conclusion of the process and the steps taken are documented in the document created when the complaint was initially held.

5. Operation of the internal complaints review committee

1. A complainant may appeal to the Internal Complaints Review Committee if he or she is dissatisfied with the outcome of the complaint. This can be done at the complainant's request, or we can suggest this step in the event of an impasse. For child welfare services, complainants must submit their complaint on the official ministry form available on the Valoris website, and send it to us electronically or on paper. The committee has no fixed membership. At a minimum, it will be composed of a director appointed by the Executive Director, a person not employed by Valoris (generally a member of the Board of Directors), and another member of the Valoris leadership team who has not been involved in the file concerned by the review.
2. General Director is notified when someone requests access to the internal complaints review committee. The admissibility of the complaint must be determined by a director, appointed by the Executive Director, who has no direct connection with the complaint. It is at the discretion of the designated person to decide whether the complaint is eligible for internal review. This person must assess the complaint's eligibility based on the efforts made to resolve the complaint at the direct services level and may direct the complaint back to this level if he or she deems that sufficient efforts have not been made to resolve it.
3. A written response must be dated and sent to the complainant no later than seven days after the date of receipt of the complaint, informing him or her of the admissibility of the complaint. In this document, we must indicate whether or not the complaint is eligible for review, the reasons supporting our decision, the date and time when the internal complaints review committee will meet, as well as the location where the meeting will take place; the name of the Valoris contact person whom the complainant may contact, should he or she have any questions. In determining the admissibility of the complaint, we will consider only the facts of the case.
4. If the complaint is admissible, a meeting between the complainant and the members of the internal complaints review committee will be scheduled within 14 days of the written notice of admissibility, unless extenuating circumstances delay this meeting. At the meeting, the complainant may be accompanied by a person of his or her choice. The objective is to meet with the complainant to see if the parties can resolve the complaint and agree on the next steps.

5. Within 14 days of the meeting, the committee must send the complainant a written summary of the results of the meeting and the steps agreed upon. Management will be informed at this stage. If the complainant is not satisfied with the results and the complaint is admissible (see conditions above), the complainant may appeal the decision to the Commission (CRSEF).
6. If the complainant is dissatisfied with the Internal Review Committee's recommendations, the Committee Chair will notify the Executive Director and the complainant will be referred to the Program Supervisor in the Regional Office of the Ministry of Children, Community and Social Services.

Definitions

Complaint: A complaint is the verbal or written expression of a customer's dissatisfaction with the services they have received or should have received. With some exceptions, an anonymous customer complaint will be deemed inadmissible; the supervisor of the department where the complaint was lodged will ensure the safety of the persons concerned, before disposing of it.

Annex(es)

Formal child welfare complaint to the Commission (CRSEF): [Making a complaint against a CAS](#)

References

- *Child, Youth and Family Services Act, 2017 (CYFS Act)*
- *Act respecting services and supports promoting the social inclusion of persons with an intellectual disability, 2008*
- *S-202 Rights and responsibilities of children under the care of Valoris*