

If you are First Nation, Inuit or Métis, you also have the right to:

- ♦ Involve a representative from your Community/First Nation.
- ♦ Have an additional support person present in any complaint meetings.

The Society recognizes the harm Indigenous people endured and the trauma they continue to experience today from child welfare. In an effort to reconcile these injustices, for First Nations, Inuit, or Métis children, youth and families, their culture, heritage, traditions, and connection to community will always be considered and specifically taken into account by the Society when a decision is made affecting them.

If you are a child or youth:

You have a right to ask for help if you think your rights are not being respected and you have the right to make a complaint if you remain unsatisfied.

- ♦ Try talking to your worker first. You can talk to your worker alone or express your concerns with another support person present, whichever you prefer.
- ♦ If that does not help, you can ask to talk to your worker's manager.
- ♦ If the concern continues, you can call or write a letter to a Director of Service.
- ♦ If you want to talk to a lawyer, you can call the **Office of the Children's Lawyer** at:

1-416-314-8000

For more information on
child and youth rights, go to:
www.ontario.ca/RightsResource

External Formal Complaint Procedure

You have the right to make an External Formal Complaint through the provincial Child and Family Service Review Board (CFSRB).

- ♦ The **Child and Family Services Review Board (CFSRB)**, which is a neutral and independent third party, may be reached at:

1-888-777-3616 or <http://www.cfsrb.ca/>

The Child and Family Services Review Board will determine if your complaint is eligible for review.



Child and Family Services of Grand Erie
Phone: 519-753-8681
Toll Free: 1-888-753-8681
E-mail: general@cfsge.ca
Website: cfsge.ca

Concerns & Complaints



**Working with Child and Family
Services of Grand Erie**

cfsge.ca

Child and Family Services of Grand Erie

Child and Family Services of Grand Erie (CFS GE) staff are committed to offering optimal service to children and families. We want to work with children, youth and families in the best way possible to understand the source of any problems and try to resolve it.

Why does CSF GE visit?

In Ontario, child welfare agencies have the legal obligation of ensuring children are safe 365 days a year, 24 hours a day. These responsibilities are defined under the Child, Youth and Family Services Act, 2017 (CYFSA).

What may happen?

When CFS GE receives a concern about a child under the age of 18 who may be in need of protection, the Society will initiate an assessment. They will meet with parents/caregivers to obtain more information about the situation and may request to speak with additional supports or professionals. A part of the assessment will also be to speak with your child independently to obtain their views and wishes.

Can CFS GE enter my home without permission or attend my child's school?

Meetings with children may take place at home, school or other locations. Workers will often seek your permission prior to meeting with a child at school however depending on the severity of the concern, this could occur without your knowledge or consent. In situations where a child is believed to be at imminent risk, the law permits the right of entry into a home to assess the child's safety.

What if I have a concern or complaint?

A clear, transparent process of how to make a complaint is available when people feel they have not been heard.

The Society is committed to responding to service complaints in a timely way, in a manner that is respectful and acknowledges the power associated with child welfare services.

It is understood that discrimination, prejudice, bias, and disparaging practices are prevalent in most areas of Society, including child welfare. The Society prioritizes affirming identities and understanding associated experiences so supportive and equitable services can be provided. People receiving service from CFS GE have a right to have their voice heard and we want to know when something is not working well.

As an agency, we collectively share the responsibility to serve families. We seek to learn from each situation so that we can continually improve service delivery.

Complaint Resolution Process:

- ◆ Please speak with your assigned worker first and try to resolve the issue.
- ◆ If you are still concerned, you may speak with, or request a meeting with, the assigned worker's Manager.
- ◆ If you are unable to resolve your worries through contact with the Manager, you may request a meeting with the Director of Service.

Most concerns from people receiving service are dealt with by the assigned worker and/or their manager. Optimal outcomes can be achieved at this level and are necessary, as in most instances, even after a complaint, the worker and family may continue to have a working relationship.

Internal Complaints Review Procedure:

- ◆ If you are still unsatisfied with the Society's response, you can choose to make a written complaint and request an **Internal Complaints Review Panel (ICRP) to hear your concerns.**
- ◆ **Forms are available** in English or French from your worker, at the office, from our public website or at <https://www.forms.ssb.gov.on.ca>.
- ◆ You will receive a written response within seven days advising if your complaint is eligible for review.
- ◆ If your complaint is eligible for review, a meeting with the Society's **Internal Complaints Review Panel (ICRP)** will be scheduled within 14 days at a mutually convenient time. The ICRP members who hear your complaint will not be directly involved in the services provided to you or your family.
- ◆ Within 14 days following this meeting, you will receive a letter summarizing the meeting and next steps.

Ontario Ombudsman

At any point that you need help, you may also contact the Ontario Ombudsman about anything:

Call Toll Free: 1-800-263-2841

Email: cy-ej@ombudsman.on.ca

www.ombudsman.on.ca

The **Black Legal Action Centre** is an independent not-for-profit community legal clinic that combats individual and systemic racism. For support contact:

Black Legal Action Centre (BLAC)

Call : 1-416-597-5831

E-mail: blacclinic@lao.on.ca



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