

## **Community Complaint Procedures**

From time to time, a client or member of the community may have a complaint or concern regarding the quality of our work. It is important to address such matters promptly.

In most instances, if you are the first staff person to hear the complaint, you should be able to resolve the issue immediately and are encouraged to do this.

When immediate resolution is not possible, you should refer the matter to your Department Director (or his/her designee) who will take over responsibility for resolution and will inform the Chief Executive Officer if, in his/her judgment, it is warranted by the nature of the complaint.

The Department Director will establish a file of the complaint, including the date of the original complaint, and will work to resolve the matter through direct interaction with the complainant.

If the direct interaction by the Department Director fails to satisfy the complainant within 30 days and there is an appeal or hearing process built into the service contract or grant, that process will be followed at this point.

Otherwise, the Department Director will engage an independent, informed third party (e.g. staff from another agency, funding source staff) to review the case and issue a determination of resolution.

If the independent resolution is acceptable to both the complainant and the Department Director, the case will be closed and a summary report will be sent to the Chief Executive Officer.

If the independent resolution is unacceptable to either party, the case and the resolution will be reviewed by the Chief Executive Officer and one officer of the Board of Directors and a final determination will be made by the Chief Executive Officer.

This will exhaust Penquis' internal community complaint process.

At this point and at any point during the process outlined above, if the complainant is not satisfied with the process or outcome, he or she will be informed of appropriate alternate avenues for pursuing the grievance, such as the funding source, and how to make contact with those alternate avenues.