

2760 COMPLAINTS PROTOCOL

Chapter: **General Administrative Operations**

Section: **Information**



New Hampshire Division for Children, Youth and Families Policy Manual

Policy Directive: **01-26**

Approved:

Effective Date: **June 6, 2001**

Scheduled Review Date:

DCYF Director

Related Statute(s):

Related Admin Rule(s):

Related Federal Regulation(s):

Related Form(s): **FORM 2015**

Bridges' Screen(s) and Attachment(s):

Purpose

This policy is intended to: (1) ensure that family member concerns or complaints are handled consistently and that information is provided to those entitled to such information; (2) ensure that case information that can be shared is provided to those who request it; and (3) ensure that family members and consumers are treated fairly.

Policy

- I. Concerns and complaints from family members and others involved with DCYF may be submitted by a variety of sources including:
 - A. Letter;
 - B. Telephone;
 - C. Electronic mail; or
 - D. Personal contact.
- II. When inquiries are received at State Office, they may be reviewed by the Director, the Program Administrators, and/or administrative support staff, sorted, and forwarded to the local District Office for reply.
- III. Written inquiries sent to the Director must be responded to within one week of receipt. When possible, telephone inquiries must be responded to within 24 hours of receipt.
- IV. Inquiries from the Office of the Governor or the DHHS Commissioner's Office must be acted upon immediately and responded to within 2 days of receipt.
- V. Inquiries must have a reply prepared by D.O. Program Manager or designee, be reviewed and approved by the CP or JPP Supervisor, and then be returned to State Office for signature by the person to whom the original request was made.
- VI. Inquiries, which are made to a CPSW, JPP, or Supervisor and copied to others, must be answered by the addressee and approved by the Supervisor. Copies of the reply must be sent to each staff member listed in the original inquiry.
- VII. Complaints are recorded on the "Inquiry Log" (Form 2015).

Procedures

- I. State Office administrative support staff must:
 1. Refer telephone inquiries to the local D.O. Program Manager for resolution;
 2. If the caller believes the matter can only be resolved by State Office staff, then refer the caller to the CP Assistant Administrators, the CP Administrator, Juvenile Justice Administrator, or designee, as appropriate;
 3. If the caller refuses to speak with DCYF staff, direct the caller to the DHHS Commissioner's Office or inform the caller that he or she may either call or write to the Office of the Ombudsman and provide that office's telephone number and address;
 4. Send any documentation by fax or interoffice mail, to the D.O. Program Manager for reply;
 5. Establish a tickler system to ensure that replies are submitted on time; and
 6. Review the reply prepared by the local DCYF office and forward the reply to the Director for signature.
- B. The Child Protection Administrator or Juvenile Justice Administrator retains Forms 2015 on file arranged by District Office name for at least 3 years in a central location at State Office.
- C. District Office Program Manager must:
 1. Review the concern or complaint and reviews case records to determine what interventions have occurred;
 2. Assign the inquiry to staff for review, any necessary action, and preparation of a reply;
 3. Complete Form 2015 and forward it to State Office;
 4. Make recommendations to staff for resolution of the issues, which may include meeting with the family and their advocates;
 5. Prepare or assist staff in preparing the reply to the inquiry; and
 6. Submit the reply to State Office within the provided time frames.