

## CVS POLICY & PROCEDURE MANUAL

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**Policy Area:** Operational Policies - Service Delivery

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**Policy # & Name:** 5.8 Complaints and Conflict Resolution

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**Group:** All Staff; Volunteers; Contracted Caregivers

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**Purpose:**

To create and sustain a service delivery and working environment that is positive, open, conflict-free, and focused on meeting the needs of consumers.

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**Policy Statement:**

CVS is committed to preventing and resolving complaints and conflict by adhering to the following principles:

Open communication and shared problem solving are encouraged.

Persons served are involved and listened to when decisions are made that affect them.

Decisions are communicated in a timely and understandable manner and individuals served may appeal a decision.

People are treated with respect and dignity.

All staff have a responsibility to resolve problems in a prompt, professional manner. **CVS** expects that its staff take an active, respectful role in resolving issues as they arise.

**Exceptions:**

This policy does not apply to employees covered by a collective agreement with terms that are contrary to this policy. It also does not apply to cases of suspected abuse.

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**Practice Standards:**

Provide accessible information on complaints and conflict resolution to staff, volunteers, consumers and their families/caregivers.

Follow the attached CVS conflict resolution procedures.

In the case of a complaint or conflict involving the Executive Director, the President of the Board of Directors mediates or decides who will mediate, and the Board makes the final determination.

Ensure all individuals receiving services know that lodging a complaint or formal grievance will in no way affect their treatment or access to services.

Document complaints and conflict resolutions. Conduct an annual review of complaints to determine trends and areas for performance improvement.

Include conflict resolution in staff training and in orientation for consumers, families, and caregivers.

**Best Practices:**

Be aware that conflict may arise at any point in the employment or service delivery relationship. It could be a disagreement or communication difficulties

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## CVS POLICY & PROCEDURE MANUAL

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among staff members, supervisors, or managers, or a conflict about consumers issues such as the appropriateness of services, the degree of family involvement in planning or any other problem related to planning or service delivery. Be vigilant about following the policy principles.

Encourage staff, consumers, families and caregivers to raise concerns and resolve problems as they develop. Help resolve disagreements, issues, or concerns through informal discussion and/or mediation, before formal action is taken.

When you become aware of a complaint or conflict, take prompt action. Do not allow situations to fester, hoping they will go away. They rarely do.

Assist individuals and families in writing their concerns if needed.

When dealing with a complaint or conflict, listen carefully and acknowledge the complainant's issues. Do not agree, make promises, express anger or argue. Take conflict resolution training.

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**Policy Audit:** March annually

**Date Issued:** March 2004

**Date Revised:**

**Position**

**Responsible:** Executive Director or designate

**References:**

- ✍ CVS Conflict Resolution Procedures (attached)
- ✍ SD 5.8.A - Complaint Form
- ✍ 9.10 - MCFD Complaints Process
- ✍ Advocate for Service Quality
- ✍ CVS Complaint Brochure

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# CVS POLICY & PROCEDURE MANUAL

## CVS Conflict Resolution Procedures

The intent of this procedure is to permit the people directly involved in the situation, the opportunity to resolve it respectfully and privately. This builds the foundation of integrity and trust, two essential components of a harmonious, effective team.

Follow the conflict resolution steps below, seeking and facilitating consensus at each stage. Note that the precise actions may be different, depending on whether it is a situation involving staff or consumers. This conflict resolution procedure is not intended to interfere with any union grievance procedure or other external procedure that has been initiated.

### Step 1. ? **Informal Discussion**

Encourage people to discuss the concern face to face and work it out between themselves. Use informal, consensus-based problem-solving techniques.

In regards to staff conflicts, Always talk to the person with whom you are having the problem first, staff then have the opportunity to state their perceptions of the problem. It is unfair and unproductive to speak to others not involved with the conflict by discussing the issue with others. Try to resolve the problem by talking openly, actively listening to the other persons opinion and offering your assistance. If the problem continues, ask the immediate supervisor to assist in mediating or resolving the situation.

If this can be done, there is no need to go any further. If not, tell them about the conflict resolution procedures.

Communicate clearly so the individuals involved understand the process for resolving concerns. CVS has a brochure outlining complaint procedures which can be given to the client and reviewed with them at this point.

Timeframe should be within 7 days of becoming aware of the concern.

### Step 2. ? **Formal Discussion and Documentation**

Arrange for the person with the complaint or conflict to fill out a complaint form and discuss it with the appropriate Manager or Director.

The Manager or Director involved documents this discussion.

Timeframe should be within 7 days of the Manager or Director becoming involved with the concern.

### Step 3. ? **Investigation**

The Manager/Director investigates the circumstances, with the assistance of the staff members/consumers/advocate involved.

The Manager/Director discusses his/her findings and reaches a decision with the persons involved. This is to be done within 5 working days of receiving the complaint.

## CVS POLICY & PROCEDURE MANUAL

### Step 4. ? **Report**

The Manager/Director presents a full written report to the Executive Director and to the people involved in the complaint/conflict. It outlines the investigation process, results and final decision.

This is to be done within 5 days of completion of the investigation.

### Step 5. ? **Executive Director Review**

If any party to the process is dissatisfied with the outcome, s/he may submit a written complaint to the Executive Director.

The Executive Director may revisit the investigation and review the situation with all those involved.

The Executive Director makes a decision and presents a full written report to those involved within 10 days of receiving the written complaint.

### Step 6 ? **Appeal to MCFD or Community Living BC**

If a consumer/family is dissatisfied with the outcome of the review by the Executive Director, s/he may appeal the decision to the designated MCFD Social Worker or CLBC Analyst , who will review the situation, possibly with the involvement of other Ministry staff. MCFD will notify the individual and CVS in writing of their decision.

Provide information about the CLBC or MCFD Complaints Process to consumers/families.

### Step 7 ? **Advocate for Service Quality**

Adults with developmental disabilities and/or their advocates may access an alternative grievance process through the Advocate for Service Quality, for complaints or conflicts involving services funded by the provincial government. The Advocate is an independent person who can respond to situations that require mediation or independent intervention.

Provide information about the Advocate for Service Quality (250-387-6121 in Victoria).

Provide information about Enquiry BC (1-800-663-7867 or visit their website at [EnquiryBC@gems3.gov.bc.ca](mailto:EnquiryBC@gems3.gov.bc.ca)).

Please see attached form for simple language complaint form.