

## How Do I Make a Complaint?

You have the right to make a complaint to someone you trust if you think your rights are not being respected, or your privacy has been breached. Your voice is important and the following individuals will help you complete the complaint forms or make phone calls if you ask.

- ◆ Talk to your worker/foster parents
- ◆ Talk to your worker's supervisor
- ◆ Fill out a complaint form obtained from your worker
- ◆ Contact the **Information and Privacy Commissioner of Ontario (IPC)** if your privacy has been breached or if you are not happy with the response to your request to access to your information/record at [info@ipc.on.ca](mailto:info@ipc.on.ca) or 1-800-387-0073
- ◆ If you need to talk to a lawyer, call the **Office of the Children's Lawyer (OCL)** at 416-314-8000
- ◆ Contact the **Office of the Ombudsman:**  
401 Bay Street, Suite 2200  
Toronto, ON M5H 2Y4

Or by phone at 1-800-263-2841, or email [cy-ej@ombudsman.on.ca](mailto:cy-ej@ombudsman.on.ca)

If you choose to mail your letter, you may mail the letter yourself or give it to your worker who will see that your letter is mailed to the right government office or online at: [www.ombudsman.on.ca/what-we-do/topics/children-youth](http://www.ombudsman.on.ca/what-we-do/topics/children-youth)

Sample Multi-Purpose Letter	Your Name _____
	Your Address _____
	Today's Date _____
Office of the Ombudsman 401 Bay Street, Suite 2200 Toronto, Ontario, M5H 2Y4	
Dear Sir or Madam,	
My name is _____ and I am in the care of the Children's Aid Society of the Districts of Sudbury and Manitoulin. I am living with _____ and my Child Protection Worker is _____. I have some concerns regarding my placement. (Specify your concerns).	
I would like you to review my concerns.	
Thank you for your assistance. I look forward to hearing from you.	
	Yours truly, Sign your name

- ◆ **Children and Young Persons' Rights Resource:**  
[www.ontario.ca/page/children-and-young-persons-rights-resource](http://www.ontario.ca/page/children-and-young-persons-rights-resource)
- ◆ **Children and Youth Services Review Board:**  
[tribunalsontario.ca/cfsrb/what-we-do](http://tribunalsontario.ca/cfsrb/what-we-do)

## A Child or Youth is an Individual with Rights

- ☑ Who must always be seen
- ☑ Whose voice must be heard
- ☑ Who must be listened to and respected

### Our Vision:

A community where every child is a gift to be valued, nurtured, and kept safe.

### Our Mission:

Hamilton Child and Family Supports, in partnership with families and our community, is committed to the safety, protection, and wellbeing of children and the strengthening of families, while valuing diversity and promoting equity.

### Our Values:

#### Children

Children developing to their full potential within a safe and healthy environment.  
Positive, permanent relationships for children and youth.

#### Families

The essential role of family in the lives of children.

#### Partnerships

Respectful communication and collaboration with children, families, agency colleagues, and community.

#### Quality Service

- Personal integrity
- Pursuit of professional excellence
- Progressive approach to services delivery
- Effective and efficient use of resources

**Worker's Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Worker's Phone #:** \_\_\_\_\_

26 Arrowsmith Rd. Hamilton, ON

Phone: (905) 522-1121

After Hours Emergency Service:

(905) 522-8053

[www.hamiltoncfs.ca](http://www.hamiltoncfs.ca)



Hamilton Child and Family Supports  
Soutien aux enfants et aux familles de Hamilton

## RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES for Children and Youth in Care



When you are in the care of Hamilton Child and Family Supports (HCFS), it is important for you to know that you have rights which are guaranteed by law. You are also provided with ways to file a complaint if you believe that your rights are not being respected or your privacy has been breached.

It is the job of HCFS to make sure that your rights are protected. You have a right to a safe, healthy environment and to have respect from people around you. You have the right to ask questions and seek clarification if you don't understand the answers. You have the right to be involved in decisions about your life.

You also have responsibilities while you are in care, and the purpose of this booklet is to inform you about your rights and responsibilities.

## What Are Your Rights?

You have the right:

- ◆ To speak freely and safely about your feelings, thoughts and opinions
- ◆ To have a say in decisions that affect you such as:
  - \* what kind of help you and your family need
  - \* how this help will be provided
  - \* where you will stay
  - \* to know how and why decisions are made
- ◆ To services and care that respect your cultural, religious, regional differences, gender identity and sexual orientation
- ◆ To visit in private with your family and friends, unless a judge says you cannot
- ◆ To send and receive written communication (regular mail, emails, text messages, Facebook) that are not examined or read by others (in some cases your written communication can be read or examined in your presence, if it contains something that may harm you)
- ◆ To privacy—this includes:
  - \* visiting with your family in private (unless a judge says you cannot)
  - \* speaking to your lawyer privately
  - \* having your personal information safeguarded, respected and kept private
  - \* having private time
- ◆ To receive an education according to your aptitude and ability
- ◆ To nutritious, well-balanced meals
- ◆ To appropriate clothing for your age and activities
- ◆ To regular medical and dental care
- ◆ To keep your possessions with you
- ◆ To participate in recreational and athletic activities in a community setting that are suited to your interest and ability
- ◆ To talk to your worker, your foster parents, the staff in your placement or your lawyer about any decisions that affect you
- ◆ To non-physical discipline (that is, no spanking or hitting, etc.)

You also have the right:

- ◆ To obtain information from your own personal records (except information about someone else or information that is likely to harm you); your worker can help you make a formal request and support you through the process
- ◆ To request corrections to your record
- ◆ To sign your “care agreement” if you are 12 years and older and admitted to care voluntarily (not by a court order)
- ◆ To be involved in developing and signing your “Plan of Care”
- ◆ To consent to confidential counselling
- ◆ To be notified of and attend court unless you or the judge decide it would not be in your best interest
- ◆ To have your placement reviewed
- ◆ To have independent legal counsel
- ◆ To be notified at the first reasonable opportunity if your personal information is lost, stolen, used, or disclosed without authority

### How to Request a Placement Review:

At any time, you can request that the Residential Placement Advisory Committee (RPAC) review your placement and make recommendations. Your worker, lawyer, or parent can help you in getting these reviews.

If you are still unhappy you can request further review by the Child, Youth and Family Services Review Board (CSRB).

The Review Board will:

- Hear your concerns
- Make recommendations to you and the agency regarding placement decisions

### Planning For Your Future:

Talk to your worker if you would like to remain involved with HCFS beyond your 18<sup>th</sup> birthday for continued support and/or if you would like to attend college, university, or a specialized training program.



## What Responsibilities Do You Have?

You have the responsibility:

- ◆ To accept the consequences if you break the rules
- ◆ To respect the rights, property, privacy, and needs of others
- ◆ To meet with and talk to your worker on a regular basis
- ◆ To attend school regularly
- ◆ To notify your foster parents or the staff in your placement of your whereabouts or if you will be late
- ◆ To be helpful to others in the home
- ◆ To maintain open communication with your foster parents or staff
- ◆ To respect others regardless of race, colour, religion, abilities, gender identity and sexual orientation
- ◆ To show up for, and participate in appointments (e.g., medical, dental, psychological, plan of care, etc.)



*For more information about  
the care you deserve:*

