

DIRECTIVE

Directive No.: 2026 - 01

Date Issued: March 23, 2026

Authority

This Directive is issued under the authority of the General Manager of Toronto Shelter and Support Services (TSSS).

Subject

Amendments to the standards on Compliments, Complaints and Appeals in the [Toronto Shelter Standards](#) and the [24-Hour Respite Site Standards](#).

Purpose of Directive

The purpose of this directive is to

- 1) Communicate amendments to standard 7(c) of the [Toronto Shelter Standards](#) and standard 7(g) of the [24-Hour Respite Site Standards](#) regarding the documentation of Compliments, Complaints and Appeals; and
- 2) Support the implementation of the updated SMIS Complaints Module by establishing a standardized approach to documenting escalated program-level complaints across the sector.

The City of Toronto is the Service Administrator for SMIS and the Service System Manager for City-funded shelter and support services but does not retain responsibilities as an employer for third-party agencies.

Documenting complaints in SMIS does not replace an organization's existing complaints policies and procedures. It is the provider's responsibility to maintain and administer its own complaints process in alignment with the [Toronto Shelter Standards](#) and [24-Hour Respite Site Standards](#).

Access to complaint records in the SMIS Complaints Module is role-based and limited to authorized users. TSSS will maintain its duty to protect the confidentiality of all parties in accordance with the Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act (MFIPPA).

Directive or Required Action

Effective March 23rd, 2026, all shelter and 24-Hour respite sites are required to document formal/escalated program level complaints in the SMIS Complaint Module. Formal/escalated complaints are those that cannot be resolved immediately and require further review. The complaints module is *not* intended for service requests, complaints about staff, complaints from community members or matters which are resolved immediately.

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Mandatory use of the SMIS Complaints Module is intended to establish a consistent sector-wide approach to complaint documentation in alignment with the [Toronto Shelter Standards](#) and the [24-Hour Respite Site Standards](#). The standards concerning Compliments, Complaints and Appeals are found under section 7 of the Toronto Shelter Standards and 24-Hour Respite Site Standards.

Amendments to the Toronto Shelter Standards and the 24-Hour Respite Site Standards are in **bold** text.

Toronto Shelter Standards Section 7 – Compliments Complaints and Appeals

- c) Shelter providers must
 - (i) Inform clients of this process
 - (ii) Post their complaint and appeals process in a conspicuous area of the shelter
 - (iii) Inform clients of who the lead is for their location
 - (iv) Keep a written record of formal complaints, including the investigation process and a written record of the resolution of formal complaints
 - *new standard***
 - (v) Document formal complaints from clients within the SMIS Complaints Module and ensure that the completed complaint form is attached to the corresponding client file in SMIS.**

and

24-Hour Respite Site Standards Section 7 – Compliments Complaints and Appeals

- g) Providers must
 - (i) Inform all clients of this process
 - (ii) Post their complaint and appeals process in a conspicuous area of the 24-Hour Respite Site
 - (iii) Inform clients of who the complaint lead is for their location
 - (iv) Keep a written record of formal complaints, including the investigation process and the resolution

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(v) Document formal complaints from clients within the SMIS Complaints Module and ensure that the completed complaint form is attached to the corresponding client file in SMIS.

Implementation of the Directive

All applicable staff (i.e., staff who work with clients and have access to SMIS) must complete the mandated training module and are expected to use the SMIS Complaints Module immediately.

Quick Reference Guides are also available to support staff in navigating the Complaints Module.

Compliance monitoring will be conducted by Quality Assurance in Q3 of 2026 and annually thereafter.

Background

The existing Complaint Module in SMIS has been updated to reflect the current format and sections of the Toronto Shelter Standards (TSS) and the 24-Hour Respite Site Standards (TRS), and to optimize the module for ease of use.

The updated Complaint Module also includes a workflow functionality to allow for consistent documentation throughout all stages of the complaint process.

While various methods of documenting site-level complaints are used across the sector, transitioning to a common method will ensure consistent quality of customer service received by clients upon submission of a complaint.

Resources

[Shelter Management Information System](#)

[Training Module](#)

[Toronto Shelter Standards](#)

[24-Hour Respite Site Standards](#)

[Amendments to Toronto Shelter Standards](#)

Contact Information

For more information about and support in implementation of this Directive, please contact your Manager or Agency Review Officer (ARO).