

7 COMPLIMENTS, COMPLAINTS AND APPEALS



- (a) Shelter providers will
 - (i) Have a policy and procedures regarding compliments, complaints and appeals, including how compliments and complaints can be made at the shelter level, how they will be kept confidential and documented, how complaints and appeals made at the shelter level will be investigated and resolved
 - (ii) Outline that any client dissatisfied with the resolution of their complaint can escalate their complaint to TSSS for a process review when all other options have been exhausted
 - (iii) Make clear that clients have the right to a fair and clear complaint resolution and appeal process without fear of reprisal, and include a process for anonymous complaints
 - (iv) Identify a staff who will act as complaint lead, as part of the complaint policy. The complaint lead will have completed CABR, 2SLGBTQ+ cultural competency and awareness, and trauma-informed trainings and be in a supervisory role. Clients will be made aware of who the complaint lead is and be reminded of this when filing a complaint.
 - (v) Offer alternative and accessible modes of submitting (a) complaint(s), as per AODA, to support clients in making a complaint, compliment or appeal, including for those involving ABR, other than through a written submission
 - (vi) Include informing clients of the status of their complaint throughout the review process, no later than 2 weeks after the initial reporting of the complaint
- (b) Shelter providers will respond professionally and appropriately to all complaints from all individuals.
- (c) Shelter providers will have a policy and procedures regarding complaints involving anti-Black racism (ABR). This will, at a minimum, include:
 - (i) Ensuring awareness among clients that complaints involving ABR should be reported, and that the level and quality of service received by a client reporting a complaint involving ABR will in no way be impacted by reporting such a complaint

- (ii) Providing a process that allows complaints involving ABR to be shared anonymously (e.g., complaints box)
 - (iii) Clear guidelines on how complaints involving ABR will be processed and how the client will be made aware of the status of their complaint throughout the review process, and no later than 2 weeks after the initial reporting of the complaint
 - (iv) Supports for client(s) who experienced incident(s) involving ABR
 - (v) A follow-up process for client(s) engaging in ABR-related behaviour that will support learning and understanding of the impact of ABR-related behaviour on the person(s) affected (e.g., review of ABR policies, follow-up meetings, etc.)
- (d) Shelter providers will implement a process that allows incidents involving queerphobia, including biphobia, homophobia and transphobia, to be shared confidentially
- (e) Shelter providers will offer supports to 2SLGBTQ+ clients who experience and report incidents of discrimination and/or queerphobia, including homophobia and transphobia (e.g., check-ins with staff, referrals to mental health services and peer supports, a private space to rest, etc.)
- (f) 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 complaint 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.
 - (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.
- (g) Shelter providers will
- (i) Submit a copy of the (a) policies and procedures to TSSS and resubmit a copy whenever the document(s) are updated or otherwise revised
 - (ii) Offer a copy of the (a) policies and procedures or a plain language version of the policy and procedures (e.g., simplified orientation brochure) to clients upon their request
- (h) Shelter providers will provide the contact information for TSSS to any client who
- (i) Has exhausted a shelter's complaints process, remains dissatisfied with how their complaint was addressed, and who wishes to escalate their complaint for process review
 - (ii) Wishes to submit a compliment about a TSSS program, service or responsibility

- (i) Shelter providers will explain the role of the Ombudsman Toronto as the final step in the complaints process once the TSSS process has been exhausted. Shelter providers will provide the contact information for the Office of the Ombudsman to any individual who
 - (i) Has already gone through the shelter provider and TSSS' complaints process and wish to pursue their complaint with Ombudsman Toronto, or as requested by the complainant.
 - (ii) Wishes to make a compliment about a City of Toronto or TSSS funded program, service or responsibility.
- (j) Compliments and complaints are a valuable source of information about a shelter's performance and can high light areas of achievement and areas for improvement. Shelter providers will collect, analyze and evaluate all compliments and complaints and take any necessary corrective action.