

THE ONTARIO OMBUDSMAN

An Ombudsman investigates complaints from the public about issues within the government's administration. The Ontario Ombudsman can investigate concerns about Children's Aid Societies.

The Ombudsman's Office will attempt to resolve complaints informally or may conduct a formal investigative process. The Ombudsman cannot force agencies to change decisions or processes, but can make recommendations for change and follow up with respect to progress.

The Ombudsman is identified on its website as "an office of last report". This means that individuals are encouraged to try any available complaint or appeal mechanism before submitting a complaint to the Ombudsman.

A complaint form for the Ombudsman can be found on their website
www.ombudsman.on.ca

RESOLVING CLIENT CONCERNS OR COMPLAINTS

The Children's Aid Society of the District of Nipissing and Parry Sound

www.parnipcas.org

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Children's Aid Society
La Société d'aide à l'enfance
NIPISSING & PARRY SOUND

ADDRESSING ISSUES BEFORE THEY BECOME PROBLEMS

We strive to engage and collaborate with families, children, and other service providers in our efforts to support families and keep children and youth safe. We encourage you to work with your Workers and their Supervisors, to resolve issues as they arise. It makes sense to address issues before they become large problems. If you have been unable to resolve issues with the Workers and Supervisors, you may contact the Director of Service or the Executive Director.

MATTERS WE CAN REVIEW

- Concerns about services you have sought or are receiving from the Children's Aid Society of the District of Nipissing and Parry Sound (CASNPS)
- Concerns about the accuracy of your records with the CASNPS
- Allegations that you have not been given the opportunity to participate and be involved in decision making about things that affect you
- Allegations that the CASNPS failed to provide reasons for a decision affecting your interest

MATTERS WE CAN'T REVIEW

- Concerns about services provided to someone other than yourself/your family
- Concerns about services you have sought or received from other agencies
- Issues that are before the court or have been decided by the court
- Issues that are subject to another decision-making process under the Child, Youth and Family Services Act or the Labour Relations Act

FORMAL COMPLAINT PROCESS

When efforts to resolve issues have not been successful, the Society has a formal complaint review mechanism.

The process consists of a meeting with the Internal Complaints Review Panel (ICRP). The ICRP consists of a Senior Manager who has not been directly involved in your situation, other staff as required, and a designate who does not work for the CAS (usually a member of the CAS Board of Directors). The ICRP's role is to understand your concerns, find areas for resolution and identify next steps.

Your complaint should be put in writing so that it will be clearly understood. There is a form that can be provided to you for this purpose. You can also obtain a copy of this form on the ministry's website.

<http://www.children.gov.on.ca>

Once you have completed the form, it can be returned to the Society via mail, fax, e-mail, or hand delivered.

Within seven days of receipt, you will be notified in writing as to whether or not your complaint is eligible for review by the ICRP. If your complaint is eligible, you will be notified of a meeting date by the ICRP. The meeting will take place within 14 days of the notification being sent unless you ask that it take place on a later date.

Within 14 days after the meeting with the ICRP, you will be provided with a written summary of the results of the meeting, along with any agreed upon next steps.

We are committed to resolving the complaint with you as quickly as possible.

CHILD & FAMILY SERVICES REVIEW BOARD

Depending on the type of complaint, you may be able to submit a complaint to the Child and Family Services Review Board (CFSRB).

You may submit a complaint directly to the CFSRB (under section 119 and 120 of the CYFSA) for the following matters:

- If a Society does not proceed with your request;
- If a Society does not respond to your written complaint within the required timelines;
- If a Society does not comply with the formal complaint review procedure or with any other procedural requirement under the CYFSA about the review of complaints;
- If the Society does not comply with their requirement under the CYFSA to ensure children and their parents have an opportunity, where appropriate, to be heard and represented when decisions affecting their interests are being made.
- If a Society does not provide you with reasons for a decision that affects your interests
- If you think there is an inaccuracy in the Society's records about you (for this type of complaint, you must complete the ICRP process before bringing an application to the CFSRB).

For more information and to complain to the CFSRB, you must fill out the CFSRB form, which you can find on their website: <http://www.sjto.gov.on.ca/cfsrb/complain-about-services-of-a-childrens-aid-society/>