



COMPLAINTS POLICY

This policy and procedure apply to complaints received by staff or board members of Big Brothers Big Sisters of Brandon about our activities, programs, services, staff or volunteers.

A. Guiding Principles

- It is in the interest of all parties that complaints are dealt with promptly and resolved as quickly as possible.
- Review of complaints is fair, impartial and respectful to all parties.
- Complainants are advised of their options to escalate their complaint to a more senior staff person if they are dissatisfied with treatment or outcome.
- Complainants are provided clear and understandable reasons for decisions relating to complaints.
- Updates are provided to complainants during review processes.
- Complaints are used to assist in improving services, policies and procedures.

B. Types of Complaints

Definition: A complaint is an expression of dissatisfaction about the service, actions, or lack of action by Big Brothers Big Sisters of Brandon as an organization or a staff member or volunteer acting on behalf of Big Brothers Big Sisters of Brandon.

Examples include but are not limited to:

- perceived failure to do something agreed upon;
- failure to observe policy or procedures;
- error made by a staff member/volunteer; or
- unfair or discourteous actions/statements by staff member/volunteer;

C. Who Can Complain

The individual who personally experienced the dissatisfactory service, action, or lack of action may complain. A representative of the individual who personally experienced the dissatisfactory, action or lack of action may also complain.

D. Complaint Receipt and Handling

A complaint may be received verbally (by phone or in person) or in writing (by mail, fax, email). An employee or volunteer who receives a complaint should first determine the proper person to handle it. This will generally be the person who has the primary relationship with the complainant or has the specific knowledge that is needed to resolve the problem. It is the responsibility of the person who receives the complaint to either resolve it or transfer it to another person who can resolve it. If the complaint is transferred, the recipient must acknowledge to the transferor that he/she has received it and will act on it.

The person who initially receives the complaint should acknowledge to the complainant that the complaint has been received and will be acted on it or another employee of Big Brothers Big Sisters of Brandon will act on it. If a timeframe for action can be determined, that should be included in the acknowledgement. Basic contact information including name, phone number and email address should immediately be recorded.

The person who initially receives the complaint should provide the complainant with contact information for the person who will be handling the complaint and assure the complainant they may contact the person handling the complaint with further information regarding the complaint or any questions they may have throughout the complaint review process.

E. Resolving the Complaint

Every effort should be made to resolve complaints received in a timely fashion. When receiving a verbal complaint, staff should listen and seek to understand the complaint, and may attempt to resolve it immediately. Complaints received in writing shall be acknowledged within two business days, and staff shall attempt to resolve the matter within ten business days.

Where a complaint cannot be resolved within ten business days, or is of a complex nature in the opinion of the person who received the complaint, it shall be escalated to the Executive Director. If the cannot resolve the complaint, it shall be escalated to the Chair of The Board.

If the complaint is about the Executive Director, the person who receives the complaint shall immediately transfer the complaint to the Chair of the Board. The Chair of the Board may consult the other members of the Board of Directors of Big Brothers big Sisters of Brandon when determining how to resolve the complaint.

Complainants should be kept informed of the status of their complaint. In the event that a complaint cannot be resolved within ten business days of the complaint being made, every attempt should be made to resolve an escalated complaint within an additional ten days, such that the complaint is resolved within one month of having been received. If the complaint cannot be resolved within one month of being received, the person handling the complaint will continue to keep the complainant informed of the status of their complaint.

F. Secondary Review Process

If a complainant is not satisfied with the resolution of their complaint or is not satisfied with the manner in which their complaint is being handled, they must be informed of their right to request that their complaint or the resolution of their complaint be reviewed. In the event that a review is requested by a complainant, a more senior employee of Big Brothers Big Sisters of Brandon, the Executive Director of Big Brothers Big Sisters of Brandon, or the Chair of the Board of Big Brothers Big Sisters of Brandon, whichever is appropriate in the circumstances, shall conduct a review.

G. Documenting the Complaint

It is necessary to keep a record of any complaint that involves a dispute over money as well as any complaint that cannot be resolved on the same day that it is received. Information about such complaints must be recorded on the Big Brothers Big Sisters of Brandon Complaints Tracking Worksheet. Information recorded on the worksheet is to include a description of the complaint, who made the complaint, who handled it, what was done to resolve the complaint, timeframe, and a description of the resolution.

H. Reporting to the Board

A summary of the complaints received, including number and type of complaints, but not the names of the individuals who made complaints, shall reported to Big Brothers Big Sisters of Brandon's Board of Directors annually.