



Deafblind and Sensory Support Network of Canada      Réseau canadien de soutien à la surdité et troubles sensoriels

<b>SECTION:</b>	PROBLEM RESOLUTION		<b>POLICY NUMBER:</b>	9.2
<b>ISSUED BY:</b>	Chief Executive Officer		<b>PAGE:</b>	1 of 7
<b>DATE OF ISSUE:</b>	January 2019	<b>REVISION DATE:</b>	July 2022, November 2024	

## COMPLAINT AND FEEDBACK RESOLUTION

### Policy

Sensity is committed to the highest possible standards of openness, honesty, participation and accountability. We strive to create and maintain a professional and courteous work environment for individuals supported and their family members.

### Purpose

This policy has been established to provide individuals supported, families and external stakeholders with a clear procedure to follow when lodging a complaint. This policy provides a clear procedure to follow for the process of handling and resolving such complaints. We realize that concerns, complaints, criticisms, suggestions for improvement and disagreements will arise as we strive to work together.

### Scope

This policy applies to all Individuals Supported, Family Members and/or Caregivers, Volunteers, members of the community, including French language users, and/or any other stakeholders that come into contact with Sensity.

### Definitions

**Member** – For the purposes of this policy this includes individuals supported, Family Members, Caregivers, Volunteers, Members of the Community and/or any additional Stakeholders, but does not include Employees.

### Preamble

#### Accountability

We believe that we are directly accountable to the individuals in our care and families we both support and work with. We are also accountable to other

SECTION:	PROBLEM RESOLUTION		
POLICY NUMBER:	9.2	PAGE:	2 of 7

parties, particularly those with whom we make agreements. All employees are required to take every reasonable step to ensure that actions follow agreed procedures and that the safety and well-being of the individual with whom they are working with is paramount.

### Participation

We aim to work as closely as possible with all families and individuals we support to determine the type of service to be provided. Families are actively involved in the planning of individuals' services and we strive to ensure lines of communication remain open to ensure we meet the needs of everyone.

### Raising Issues

While we aim to achieve high quality in services, you may find yourself needing to question or clarify why some action has been taken, or has not been taken, or you may feel worried, uncertain or uncomfortable about something. The purpose of this policy is to provide you with a process on how to get your questions answered.

### Making a Complaint

Anyone with an interest in the activities of Sensity may make a formal complaint as outlined in the procedure below. Complaints are very serious matters. We aim to work together to avoid mistakes and to resolve any difficulties positively and effectively before this formal process is felt to be necessary. If you make a complaint, you must provide your name. Anonymous complaints will be considered in the same way as other complaints but are often limited in their effect as some information may inevitably be beyond checking.

### Procedure

Sensity will maintain confidentiality about identifying personal information about the complaint to the extent possible, while adhering with legislative and criminal reporting requirements. Employees have the right to be informed when a complaint involving them has been made, and the right and responsibility to be party to its resolution.

All individuals who are deafblind and/or their families/guardians will receive a copy of the Complaints and Feedback Resolution Policy upon entering service with Sensity. In addition, a copy of the policy and its corresponding documents will be made available on the Sensity website. Sensity will ensure

SECTION:	PROBLEM RESOLUTION		
POLICY NUMBER:	9.2	PAGE:	3 of 7

that support is provided to people in lodging a complaint, using alternate forms of communication as required.

There will be no negative repercussions to the services provided to the Individuals supported should a complaint be made. Individuals who have complaints or concerns are encouraged to use these procedures without fear of retaliation or reprisal. Sensity does not penalize or recriminate against those who offer service complaints or feedback.

### Informal Problem Solving/Resolution

When an issue arises it is the goal of this organization that the people involved are able to resolve the concern/complaint in a timely and informal manner.

### Formal Complaints

#### Procedure 1 – Complaint by an individual supported, Family or Guardian of an individual using Sensity’s services.

The following procedures are to be followed should there be a complaint about the service/non-services provided by Sensity:

##### **Step 1:** Discussion with the Person with Whom You Have a Concern:

Start with the person with whom you have a concern and attempt to resolve the problem. You may present your concern verbally or in writing. If required, you encouraged to ask for assistance from a friend or advisor.

If you choose to present your concern in writing, you may find it helpful to use the **Complaint Letter form** attached to this procedure. The letter can be handed to the staff person or mailed to the address indicated.

##### **Step 2:** Discussion with the Intervenor Services Coordinator:

This step should be taken when your efforts to resolve your difficulties have not proven successful or you are not comfortable communicating directly with the person. Should you wish to proceed to Step 1, Please telephone, e-mail or use the Complaint Letter Form attached in order to communicate with the Supervisor. This letter can be provided to the Supervisor in person or sent by mail/email.

SECTION:	PROBLEM RESOLUTION		
POLICY NUMBER:	9.2	PAGE:	4 of 7

Within five working days of being made aware of your concern, the Supervisor will meet with you. Prior to this meeting, the Supervisor will have discussed the situation with the employee, as applicable and may decide to include the employee at the meeting.

The Supervisor will expect you to explain the problem as you see it and to suggest solutions to the problem from your point of view. Within five days of having met with the Supervisor, you can expect a response from the Supervisor which will either confirm an agreement established at the meeting, or if no agreement is reached, detail the Supervisor's decision regarding your concern.

**Step 3: Discussion with the Manager of Intervenor Services:**

This step will be necessary if you are not satisfied with the results of your efforts at Step 2. Again, as in Step 2, we would ask you to communicate your concern by telephone or letter to the Manager. The Manager will arrange a meeting time for you within ten working days of having become aware of your concerns. The Manager will speak with the Supervisor prior to the meeting to determine the steps the Supervisor have taken in an effort to resolve your concern.

The goal of this meeting will be to look further for a solution to your concerns. Within ten working days subsequent to the meeting, you can expect to receive, in writing, a confirmation of any agreement arrived at in your meeting, or failing agreement, including the Manager's decision regarding your concern.

**Step 4: Discussion with the Director of Services:**

This step will be necessary if you are not satisfied with the results of your efforts at Step 3. Again, as in Step 3, we would ask you to communicate your concern by telephone or letter to the Director. The Director will arrange a meeting time for you within ten working days of having become aware of your concerns. The Director will speak with the Manager prior to the meeting to determine the steps the Manager have taken in an effort to resolve your concern.

The goal of this meeting will be to look further for a solution to your concerns. Within ten working days subsequent to the meeting, you can expect to receive, in writing, a confirmation of any agreement arrived at in your

SECTION:	PROBLEM RESOLUTION		
POLICY NUMBER:	9.2	PAGE:	5 of 7

meeting, or failing agreement, including the Director's decision regarding your concern.

**Step 5: Discussion with Chief Services Officer (CSO):**

This step will be necessary if you are not satisfied with the results of your efforts at Step 4. Again, as in Step 4, we would ask you to communicate your concern by telephone or letter to the CSO. The CSO will arrange a meeting time for you within ten working days of having become aware of your concerns. The CSO will speak with the Director prior to the meeting to determine the steps the Manager have taken in an effort to resolve your concern.

The goal of this meeting will be to look further for a solution to your concerns. Within ten working days subsequent to the meeting, you can expect to receive, in writing, a confirmation of any agreement arrived at in your meeting, or failing agreement, including the CSO's decision regarding your concern.

**Step 6: Discussion with the Chief Executive Officer (CEO):**

This is the step you take if you remain dissatisfied with the decision of the Program or Department Director. At this step, you should direct your written complaint to the Chief Executive Officer outlining the steps taken to resolve your concern. Within twenty working days of receiving your letter, it will be arranged that a meeting or discussion with the CEO and any additional parties that may be required to come to a solution. You will be notified of the date, time and place of the meeting. The CEO will speak with the Director, Manager and/or the Supervisor prior to this meeting.

The goal of this meeting will be to look further for a solution to your concerns. Within twenty working days subsequent to the meeting, you can expect to receive in writing a confirmation of any agreement arrived at in you meeting or failing agreement, including the CEO's decision regarding your concern.

**Step 7: Discussion with Sensity Board of Directors:**

This step is to be taken if you remain dissatisfied with the resolution arrived at during your meeting with the CEO. At this step, you should direct your written complaint to:

Board of Directors: Chair  
[boardchair@sensity.ca](mailto:boardchair@sensity.ca)

<b>SECTION:</b>	<b>PROBLEM RESOLUTION</b>		
<b>POLICY NUMBER:</b>	<b>9.2</b>	<b>PAGE:</b>	<b>6 of 7</b>

The Board Committee will have been provided with a summary of all previous activity and efforts regarding your concerns. You will receive a letter from the Board Committee, outlining their recommendations and decisions with twenty working days of your meeting with them.

## **Procedure 2 – Complaint Procedures to be followed by Other Members of the Community**

Should you have concerns about the way Sensity is functioning, or our French language services, it is important that you share those concerns with us. We need to know them so that we can make every effort to resolve them.

### **Step 1: Discussion with the Chief Executive Officer (CEO):**

You can contact the CEO by telephone or in person.

The CEO will make every effort to work with you in an attempt to resolve your concern. Should you request written confirmation of the results of your meeting with the CEO, you can expect to receive a response within fifteen working days.

### **Step 2: Discussion with Sensity Board of Directors:**

Should you be dissatisfied with the result of the problem resolution efforts of the CEO, you may provide your concerns to the:

Board of Directors: Chair  
[boardchair@sensity.ca](mailto:boardchair@sensity.ca)

A member of the Board will contact you to set up a meeting with you within twenty working days of having received your concern. You may request their decision, in writing, which will be forthcoming within ten working days.

## **Additional Information**

Complaints arise from matters to do with the equality of service provided to people and to the activities of the organization. Matters relating to conditions of work and work relationships are dealt with through the Dispute Resolution Policy.

Any complaint that is considered serious by the service agency is to be reported to the Ministry of Children, Community and Social Services (MCCSS) as outlined in MCCSS Serious Occurrence Reporting Guidelines.

<b>SECTION:</b>	<b>PROBLEM RESOLUTION</b>		
<b>POLICY NUMBER:</b>	<b>9.2</b>	<b>PAGE:</b>	<b>7 of 7</b>

Sensity will promptly ensure that any complaint brought to its attention that meets the criteria outlined in the 11.2 Abuse Prevention, Identification & Reporting Policy will follow the process identified in the policy and will ensure that the matter is reported to the police, where the complaint relates to an alleged, suspected or witnessed abuse situation that may constitute a criminal offence.

All complaints that include concerns about the practice of an individual employee may involve applicable disciplinary procedures. If, after investigation, the employee is exonerated, no further action will be taken. If the complaint is found to be justified the disciplinary action will follow the disciplinary processes. Copies of the disciplinary action will be kept confidential, and a copy will be placed in the employee's personnel file.

Sensity will maintain records of all formal complaints through the use of the Member Complaint Review Form. The record will show the outcome of the situation, including any changes to policies, practices and/or training; and will note if disciplinary action was taken but will not include the detail of that action.

### **Training**

All employees will receive training on this policy during orientation.

### **Monitoring & Evaluation**

All formal complaints and actions taken to resolve a complaint will be reviewed with and reported to the CEO for evaluation and ongoing quality assurance.

### **Forms**

- Complaint Letter Form

<https://sensity.brightspace.com/d2l/le/content/6718/viewContent/4504/View>