



## EXTERNAL COMPLAINTS POLICY

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## Table of Contents

1.	INTRODUCTION	3
2.	PURPOSE AND APPLICATION	3
2.1.	Purpose	3
2.2.	Application	3
3.	GUIDING PRINCIPLES	3
4.	COMPLAINT PROCESS	3
4.1.	Initial inquiry	3
4.2.	Reporting a Compliant	3
4.3.	Good faith and provision of sufficient information	4
5.	COMPLAINT HANDLING	4
5.1.	Seeking additional information	4
5.2.	Investigations	4
5.3.	Reporting	4
5.4.	Anonymous Allegations	4
5.5.	Board reporting	4
6.	POLICY REVIEW	4

## 1. Introduction

The Strathroy Middlesex General Hospital Foundation (the "Foundation or SMGHF") is committed to a high standard of conduct and ethical business practices. The Foundation recognizes that there may be concerns and complaints from Foundation's stakeholders occasionally, and we believe that the process for resolving such problems and complaints should be timely, fair, and respectful.

## 2. Purpose and Application

### 2.1. Purpose

This Policy aims to create a transparent and fair method of receiving and responding to external complaints.

### 2.2. Application

This Policy applies to the complaints from stakeholders of the Foundation, such as donors, beneficiaries, partners, other individuals, or organizations with an interest in the charitable purpose of the Foundation and who have concerns or complaints about the service, action, or lack of action by the Foundation, Directors, Officer, Staff or Volunteers acting on behalf of the Foundation.

## 3. Guiding Principles

- a. The complaint review process is fair, impartial, and respectful of all parties.
- b. It is in the best interests of all parties that complaints are resolved as quickly as possible and in a timely manner.
- c. Complainants are given clear and understandable justifications for complaints-related decisions.
- d. If a complainant is unhappy with the treatment or outcome, they are informed of their options to escalate their complaint to a more senior staff member.
- e. During review processes, complainants receive updates.
- f. Complaints are utilized to enhance services, policies, and procedures.

## 4. Complaint Process

### 4.1. Initial inquiry

Many concerns can be resolved easily and quickly, often at the time they arise, by speaking with your Foundation representative or by contacting the Foundation's general inquiries telephone line at 519-246-5906 or emailing at [info@smghfoundation.com](mailto:info@smghfoundation.com). The Foundation will acknowledge the receipt of your inquiry within two (2) business days and efforts will be made to resolve the matter within ten (10) business days. As determined by the Foundation, another staff member, officer, or Board member may be assigned to handle the inquiry.

#### 4.2. Reporting a Compliant

If the matter cannot be resolved after the initial inquiry, a complaint should be escalated in writing or by email directly to the CEO at [smclean@smghfoundation.com](mailto:smclean@smghfoundation.com). If the complaint is about the CEO, it will be handled by the Chief Operating Officer. The complainant (s) should be kept informed of the status of their complaint. Every attempt should be made to resolve escalated complaints within an additional ten (10) business days.

#### 4.3. Good faith and provision of sufficient information

Complainants are expected to act in good faith and provide sufficient information to allow for the investigation of their complaints, including the date, time, location, individual(s) involved, and a description of the specific conduct or service quality issue(s).

### 5. Complaint Handling

#### 5.1. Seeking additional information

The Foundation will investigate the complaint and may seek additional information from any Foundation officer, director, employee, contractor, witness, or stakeholder, as appropriate. The Foundation's response to a specific allegation will depend on the nature of the alleged infraction.

#### 5.2. Investigations

Each complaint is unique, but the Foundation will treat any allegation reported in accordance with this Policy with respect and discretion. The Foundation will take reasonable corrective or disciplinary action if the facts so warrant. The Foundation may report to the appropriate authorities any complaints alleging criminal conduct.

#### 5.3. Reporting

Subject to the timeframes outlined in section 4 of this Policy, the Foundation will respond as quickly as possible after the matter has been reviewed and a determination has been made. The complainant will be informed of the investigation's conclusion, while the privacy rights of the individuals involved will be respected.

#### 5.4. Anonymous Allegations

The comprehensive investigation frequently relies on the capacity to acquire supplementary data. The Foundation strongly encourages individuals filing complaints to provide their names while submitting their enquiries. The Foundation will endeavour to investigate anonymous queries to the fullest degree feasible but will carefully consider the wisdom of pursuing an investigation considering the probability of substantiating the facts or circumstances through verifiable sources.

### 5.5. Board reporting

A summary of the complaints received and disposed of, including number and type, will be reported annually to the Foundation's Board of Directors.

## 6. Policy Review

The Governance Committee/Board of Directors shall conduct periodic reviews of this Policy at least once every five (5) years. The Governance Committee shall present any recommended changes, modifications, or deletions of the provisions of this Policy to the full Board of Directors at its regularly scheduled meeting following the Committee's review.