

Complaints Resolution Process

Atira understands concerns may arise about how we conduct ourselves with respect to our programs and services. We trust this complaint resolution process allows you the opportunity to be heard and allows our staff the opportunity to best hear your concerns. Our intention is to always act in the best interests of ALL of the women and children we serve. We understand you have the right to raise your concerns and that we have a responsibility to carefully consider your concerns and to respond.

Some examples of concerns that could arise include the following:

- You believe you are being harassed, discriminated against or threatened;
- You believe you are not being treated with respect and dignity;
- You believe you are being treated unfairly;
- You believe you are being excluded from planning/decision-making about you or your child(ren);
- You believe staff are being unclear in stating expectations of program participants/tenants;
- You believe staff or programs are not living up to Atira's stated mandates and/or commitments;
- You are dissatisfied with Atira's services at any level.

All concerns and/or complaints will be dealt with fairly, promptly and where appropriate, in confidence. A resolution means ALL parties involved in the complaint are heard and fully involved in the process. If the resolution is not what you were hoping for, it does not mean there was no resolution. Whatever the outcome of a complaint, our priority is to reach a resolution that benefits ALL of the women Atira serves and one that honours Atira's mission and mandate. It is also Atira's priority to ensure all resolutions, solutions and decisions are properly explained to and understood by everyone involved.

Step One, Informal Review:

You are always encouraged to resolve your complaint informally and directly with the person you have concerns about or whose behaviour caused your concern. In most cases, this is the fastest and easiest way to work things out. If you are unable to resolve your complaint informally or directly or if you feel uncomfortable doing so, you may choose to go to Step Two of the Informal Review by speaking with the Program Manager.

Step Two, Informal Review:

The manager of the program is closest to the situation and so in most cases is best able to find a quick and satisfactory resolution. As she will want to find the facts of the complaint, she may need to ask others for their input. The results of her review will be shared with you in a meeting. If you are unable to resolve your complaint by speaking with the program manager or if you feel uncomfortable doing so, you may request a Formal Review.

Step Three, Formal Review:

A Complaint Resolution Committee will be formed to review your complaint. The Committee will include two managers from programs other than the one where your complaint arose as well as a woman from Atira's administrative team. The Committee will be made up of women who have had no involvement in any matters related to your complaint. The Complaint Resolution Committee will work to find the best solution for everyone involved, which may include speaking with all parties. They may also request a meeting, giving everyone an opportunity to come together to find a resolution. Whichever process they adopt, they will speak with you to provide an explanation of both the process and resolution and you will receive a letter documenting their process, resolution, follow up as applicable and reasons for all of their decisions and actions.

To start a Formal Review, you can ask the program manager to assist you, email your request to complaints@atira.bc.ca, which goes directly to the administrative office, or write a letter to: Complaints Resolution Committee, Atira Women's Resource Society, 101 East Cordova Street, Vancouver, B.C. V6A 1K7

Step Four, Administrative Review:

If you feel your complaint was not resolved by the Complaints Resolution Committee and it is of a serious nature, you may request your complaint and the resolution adopted at Step Three be forwarded to the Executive Director, Operations for an Administrative Review. You may or may not be granted an Administrative review; it is the decision of the Executive Director, Operations after speaking with you, the Complaints Resolution Committee and reviewing the documentation. Only very serious issues will reach this step. If your request for an Administrative Review is denied, you will receive a letter informing you of the decision and reasons. If the Executive Director, Operations reviews your complaint, you will receive the results of her review and the resolution in writing.

To request a Step Four, Administrative Review, you can ask the Complaints Resolution Committee or the Program Manager to assist you, you can email your request to complaints@atira.bc.ca or write a letter to: Executive Director, Operations, Atira Women's Resource Society, 101 East Cordova Street, Vancouver, B.C. V6A 1K7

Step Five, CEO Review:

If you have been through Step Four and have met with the Executive Director, Operations or received a letter denying an Administrative Review and you still feel your complaint did not receive proper consideration, you may request in writing to have your complaint forwarded for a CEO review. The CEO will review the documentation from all steps of the process and may request a telephone or in-person meeting with you. You may or may not be granted a CEO Review; depending on the seriousness of your complaint and the thoroughness of the complaints resolution process leading up to your request for a CEO Review. It is the decision of the CEO whether your complaint will be considered for review. If your request for a CEO Review is denied, you will receive a letter informing you of her decision and reasons. If the CEO reviews your complaint, you will receive the results of her review and the resolution in writing.

To request a CEO Review, you can ask the Executive Director, Operations or the Program Manager to assist you, you can email your request to complaints@atira.bc.ca, which goes directly to the administrative office, or you can write a letter to: CEO, Atira Women's Resource Society, 101 East Cordova Street, Vancouver, B.C. V6A 1K7

Step One

- Speak directly with the person or persons whose decisions, actions or behaviour caused your concern.
- You may bring a support person with you for this conversation - another resident/tenant, staff or external advocate.
- If resolved at this stage, there will be no written record

Step Two

- Speak directly with the Program Manager.
- You may bring a support person with you for this conversation - another resident/tenant, staff or external advocate.
- If resolved at this stage, there will be no written record.

Step Three

- Request a Formal Review by a Complaints Resolution Committee.
- You may bring a support person with you if you meet with the committee - another resident/tenant, staff or external advocate.
- The Committee may speak to others to gather information. The committee will advise you in advance who it will be speaking to.
- The Committee may ask for a meeting of all parties, in an effort to resolve the complaint.
- The Committee will provide you with its resolution and reasons in writing.

Step Four

- Request an Administrative Review by the Executive Director, Operations
- The Executive Director, Operations will only review complaints of a very serious nature.
- The Executive Director, Operations will review the documentation, speak to all parties involved and may decide not to review your complaint. She will provide you with her decision and reasons in writing.
- If the Executive Director, Operations reviews your complaint, she will provide you with her process in advance, in writing.
- You may bring a support person with you if you meet with the Executive Director, Operations - another resident/tenant, staff or external advocate.
- The Executive Director, Operations will provide you with her resolution and reasons in writing.

Step Five

- Request a CEO Review by the CEO (Chief Executive Officer)
- The CEO will only review complaints of a very serious nature.
- The CEO will review the documentation, speak to all parties involved and may decide not to review your complaint. She will provide you with her decision and reasons in writing.
- If the CEO reviews your complaint, she will provide you her process in advance, in writing.
- You may bring a support person with you if you meet with the CEO - another resident/tenant, staff or external advocate.
- The CEO will provide you with her resolution and reasons in writing.