



Nimke Nupigawagan

Healing Centre

POLICY AND PROCEDURES- BUILDING OPERATIONS			
Section	Governance	Issued	August 14, 2024
Policy Title:	Complaints Policy	Effective Revised:	January 20, 2025
Issued to:	General Public	Reference	MCYS

A. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to ensure Nimke Nupigawagan Healing Centre provides a fair, effective and transparent response to complaints and concerns raised by our service users. This policy sets out the procedures for receiving, reviewing, recording and responding to complaints about our service.

Our system of triage and early resolution ensures that most complaints are resolved quickly and informally, through conversations or meetings. However, more complex complaints, especially those involving policy and process can take more time and, if the matter cannot be resolved, it could require an investigation.

B. Guiding Principles

Nimke Nupigawagan Healing Centre is committed to high standards of practice in our work. We value feedback and complaints from our service users and continuously strive to improve our services. Our complaints process is guided by the following principles:

Accessible	Nimke Nupigawagan complaints process is publicly available on our website, and service users are informed of their right to complain about our organization. Complaints are accepted in a variety of ways (i.e., webform, phone, mail, email and in-person).
Fair	All complaints will be handled in a manner that is impartial and fair. Our process provides the opportunity for service users to submit relevant information and have an opportunity to be heard before the review of the complaint is finalized. We thoroughly and objectively review the complaints we receive, and are committed to keeping people informed of the progress of their complaint.
Person Focused	We recognize that service users have different needs, and each person has their own unique history that they bring to the interaction with our agency.



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	<p>We commit to listen to our service users' concerns, treat them with dignity and respect, and maintain confidentiality throughout the complaints process</p>
Responsive	<p>We will respond to complaints within 15 business days, and will seek to resolve the complaint at the earliest opportunity. Complaints that cannot be resolved at first contact, or those that raise more serious concerns about our organization, will be forwarded for further review/investigation within 15 business days. Nimke Nupigawagan Healing Centre is committed to these time frames and will inform our service users of the progress of their complaint and reasons for any delay in the complaint resolution process.</p> <p>Please note that complaints that fall outside 12 months since the date of an incident or interaction will not be reviewed.</p>

Roles and Responsibilities of Staff:



Step 1

The Intake Assessment Officer (info@nimkee.org) is responsible for receiving, recording and assessing complaints, and will attempt to resolve the matter if possible in consultation with appropriate staff and following policy. At this stage, the Intake Assessment Officer has responsibility for explaining the complaints process to the person reporting the concern and initiate ongoing communication with the individual or group. Any complaints that are not resolved or that require further review/investigation to Stage 2 of the complaints process.

Step 2

The Manager of HR Training and Operations are responsible for reviewing and conducting investigations of complaints that are unresolved. If a complaint is not resolved to the satisfaction of



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the person raising the concerns following investigation, further internal review may be conducted by the Executive Director. If appropriate, an alternative dispute resolution (ADR) will be offered to attempt to resolve the complaint. ADR is provided with the assistance of an External provider and Traditional Resource Person.

Step 3

At any point in the complaints process, a person may choose to seek external review of the matter.

PROCEDURES:

Confidentiality of complaints

Nimkee Nupigawagan Healing Centre commits to maintaining confidentiality and protecting privacy throughout the complaints process in accordance with The Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act (R.S.O. 1990, c. F.31) (commonly abbreviated **FIPPA**) (the Act) will only collect and disclose information to those staff who are involved in the review of the complaint.

Documents relating to a complaint investigation are securely stored and only accessible to those staff involved in the review of the complaint. Complaint outcomes may be anonymized and shared within our organization to promote continuous quality improvement.

Complaint handling procedures

Stage 1: Early Resolution

Receiving complaints – Complaints can be submitted to Nimkee Nupigawagan Healing Centre in the following ways:

Box 381, Muncey, Ontario N0L 1Y0 Marked: Personal and Confidential

Email: info@nimkee.org

Telephone: 519-264-2277

In-person: 20850 Muncey Road, Chippewas of the Thames First Nation territory, Muncey, ON

Online: www.nimkee.org

Translation services are provided through HR/Operations info@nimkee.org when requested.

Acknowledging complaints – All complaints will be acknowledged within 15 working days by email, letter, and/or phone. This acknowledgement will include information about the staff member who has primary responsibility for handling the complaint, as well as information about the complaints process, including applicable timeframes.



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Assessing complaints –

Intake Assessment Officer will conduct a preliminary supervised assessment to confirm the issues raised by the complainant fall within the scope of this policy, including time factor. Staff will attempt to seek early resolution of complaints wherever possible. Issues suitable for early/informal resolution include:

Raising issues of a more serious nature are prioritized and responded to within 15 business days and concern:

Issues are **urgent or critical, complex, affects multiple people or stakeholders, involves contractual, legal, or regulatory aspects, or when the customer or stakeholder requests it.**

Authority to dismiss complaint – Complaints that are not accepted for review under this complaints policy may be dismissed by Nimkee Nupigawagan Healing Centre for the following reasons:

The executive director may, at any time before a complaint is referred to a board, dismiss all or part of the complaint where the executive director is satisfied that:

- (a) there is no jurisdiction to deal with the complaint or that part of the complaint;
- (b) the complaint or that part of the complaint is trivial, frivolous, vexatious or made in bad faith;
or
- (c) the substance of the complaint or that part of the complaint has been appropriately dealt with in another proceeding.
- (d) the concerns raised have previously been investigated by the organization and no new issues have been reported
- €the issues raised by complainant are currently before the courts or tribunal.
- (f) the issues raised by the complainant appear vexatious.
- (g) the remedy sought by the complainant is unachievable.

(2) Where the executive director dismisses all or part of a complaint, the executive director shall serve the parties to the complaint with a written notice of and the reasons for the dismissal.

When a complaint is dismissed for any of the reasons above, the complainant will be notified by email, letter, within 15 business days of receiving the complaint, with reasons provided for the decision to dismiss the complaint.

Recording complaints – When recording the complaint in the complaint tracking system, the following information will be documented:

- the complainant's name and contact information



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- when and how the complaint was received (by email, telephone, webform, mail or in-person)
- main issues raised in the complaint, including all relevant facts provided by the complainant
- any documentation submitted or interview notes taken during interaction with complainant
- the outcome sought by the complainant (if known)
- any attempts made to resolve the complaint informally, including action taken by the staff member receiving the complaint any barriers or additional support the person making the complaint may need, such as access to an interpreter

Stage 2: Investigation (if warranted, if issues are serious- legal, regulatory, or upon request)

Investigating complaints – If a complaint is not resolved by early resolution with Staff., the complainant may ask for it to be forwarded for further review by the Manager of HR and Operations or Director of Care. Requests for review should be acknowledged within 15 business days, and include information about the staff member responsible for conducting the review and the anticipated timeline for completion of the review.

Complaint investigations will be guided by the principles of administrative fairness and will be conducted in a fair, timely and impartial manner. Before commencing a formal investigation of a complaint, the HR and Operations Manager will be responsible for developing an investigation plan that will outline:

- an assessment of the main issues raised in the complaint
- what evidence is required and how it will be gathered (including the names of witnesses and order in
- which people will be interviewed, as well as other records and evidence needed for the review)
- how confidentiality will be maintained throughout the complaint investigation
- how people who are impacted by the investigation process will be notified of the outcome
- the outcome or remedy the person is seeking
- the investigation timeline
- any other relevant requirements

All relevant evidence will be considered by the investigator during the review process, and the complainant will be provided an opportunity to be heard and comment on any preliminary findings



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prior to the agency concluding the review of their complaint.

Documentation requirements for the investigation file include (for example):

- copy of the original complaint
- all interviews notes with the date, time and names of those present
- copies of all records reviewed in the course of the investigation
- a statement about any action taken in response to the complaint, or specific resolution reached on the matter, including clear reasons for decisions made
- final report outlining investigative process and outcome
- Concluding complaints – A final report/letter is due at the conclusion of a complaint investigation and provided to the complainant within 7 business days. This report/letter must be written in clear and accessible language and include information about the issues raised by the complainant. This may include:
 - a) the evidence considered during the review of the complaint, including the information provided by the complainant. If certain evidence was discounted in the review process, explain why (for example, issues with witness credibility or reliability of evidence)
 - b) the analysis of this information in the context of the agency's rules and standard procedures
 - c) what decision was reached (i.e., whether the complaint was substantiated or not)
 - d) any action taken by the agency in response to the complaint information about any appeal or review options

Remedies – If investigation of a complaint reveals that Nimkee Nupigawagan Healing Centre has made an error in providing its services to the public, we will take steps to fix the problem. The following remedies may be appropriate for substantiated complaints. For example:

- an acknowledgement and apology for the error
- reconsideration of a previous decision
- expediting an action
- waiving a sanction or fee
- issuing a payment or refund
- changing our policies and procedures to prevent re-occurrence



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Stage 3: Appeal and review options

If the person continues to have concerns at the conclusion of the complaint resolution process, staff must advise them of their right to seek further review of the matter through

Nimkee Nupigawagan Healing Centre Board of Directors

As a reminder, the Complainant has the right to appeal to an external body at any stage of this process. This may include:

- Ontario Human Rights Tribunal
- Ontario Ombudsman
- Canadian Human Rights Tribunal (Indigenous Rights, Indigenous Land only)

Continuous quality improvement

Nimkee Nupigawagan monitors complaint trends and conducts regular reviews to identify any systemic service issues and make necessary improvements in our organization. We are committed to learning from the complaints we receive from our service users and stakeholders.

Policy Revisions		
Date	Type of Revision	Name of Reviser
February 26, 2024	Policy created.	Peggy Monague McGregor
January 20, 2025	Revised.	