

## **1.9 Complaint Resolution Policy**

### ***Philosophy***

Burnaby Association for Community Inclusion encourages our individuals receiving services, families, members, advocates, and community members (our stakeholders) to bring forward concerns or complaints they may have about the Association. When concerns or complaints are brought forward, BACI is committed to resolving the matter in a timely and appropriate manner. BACI is also committed to providing stakeholders with opportunities to resolve concerns before they become formal complaints.

### ***Policy***

BACI will establish a formal process for resolving concerns or complaints brought forward by persons receiving or requesting services, family members, friends, advocates, and community members (our stakeholders). This formal process will be communicated to all stakeholders on an on-going basis. BACI will appoint a Complaints Resolution Officer to investigate complaints and facilitate resolutions.

BACI will encourage stakeholders to feel safe in reporting their concerns and complaints. Concerns or complaints brought forward will be addressed in a timely and appropriate manner. Bringing forward a concern or making a complaint will not result in retaliation, harassment or barriers to service.

BACI has the authority to implement a resolution or to use a different resolution process when there are significant barriers to BACI's ability to address a concern or complaint in a timely and appropriate manner (e.g. the unavailability of key persons or documents related to the concern or complaint, etc.). In such cases, BACI will inform the complainant of the barriers to processing the complaint in the usual manner and the subsequent resolution process that will be used. The complaint and its conclusion will still be documented and filed based on the related procedures.

### ***The BACI Complaint Resolution Officer***

The BACI Complaint Resolution Officer is the Executive Director. The Executive Director will appoint a designate to investigate and resolve formal complaints. The designate must ensure all steps of the Complaint Resolution process are complete.

If a formal complaint is made against the Executive Director, the complainant will be referred to the Executive Committee of the BACI Board of Directors. The Executive Committee designate must ensure all steps of the Complaint Resolution process are complete.

## ***Employees***

Employees who wish to bring forward a complaint or concern can do so under the Conflict Resolution Policy or grievance procedure.

## ***Board of Directors***

BACI Board of Directors who wishes to bring forward a concern or complaint will follow the process outlined in the Board Governance Manual.

## ***Concerns***

BACI will encourage stakeholders with concerns to seek an informal resolution with the BACI designates at the level where the concern first arises (e.g. Program Supervisors/Coordinators for concerns relating to programs). Where this is not possible, or where resolution has not been achieved, persons with concerns are encouraged to pursue the matter with more senior designates (e.g. Program Managers).

## ***Complaints***

Concerns that have not been resolved through informal processes, or which are considered to be serious by the stakeholder, may be brought forward through BACI formal Complaints Resolution Process. Complaints may be expressed either verbally or in writing. Stakeholders are encouraged to bring their concerns or complaints forward as soon as possible to ensure a timely response and resolution.

## ***Confidentiality of Complaints***

A complainant is required to identify him or herself when making a complaint. Anonymous complaints will not be investigated. Where possible and as appropriate, the Complaints Resolution Officer and/or designate will maintain confidentiality for both the complainant and persons named in the complaint.

Non-identifying information relating to the complaint may be used in reports for the purposes of improving the overall quality of service BACI provides. Information from the complaint will be conveyed to the funder, regulatory bodies and/or guardian where the complaint is serious and relates to the well being of supported individuals.

## ***Advocates***

Complainants may ask as advocate to assist them with making the complaint. Once an advocate has been identified, the Complaint Resolution Officer and/or designate will provide opportunities for this advocate to be present during any

discussions with the complainant. Furthermore, all letters or reports issued to the complainant will, at the request of the complainant, also be copied to the advocate.

BACI will provide complainants with information regarding the option to have an advocate support them with making a complaint. It will also inform complainants of possible persons or agencies that could fulfill this function.

### ***Investigation and Reports***

The Complaint Resolution Officer and/or designate will investigate all complaints unless to do so would interfere with a concurrent investigation by the police, a regulatory body, or another authority. In such cases, the Complaint Resolution Officer and/or designate will liaise with the investigators, as appropriate, to ensure an accurate and thorough conclusion to the investigation.

Internal investigations will consist of obtaining information relating to the complaint and of finding a resolution acceptable to both BACI and the complainant. Where the Complaint Resolution Officer and/or designate finds that BACI conducted itself inappropriately, the Complaint Resolution Officer and/or designate will issue an apology on behalf of the Association and will outline the steps and changes that will be made to prevent incidents.

The Complaint Resolution Officer and/or designate must document the resolution and communicate it to the complainant and any other related parties within 14 days of the original complaint being brought forward.

### ***Records and File Management***

The Complaint Resolution Officer and/or designate will maintain dated records of all discussions and interviews conducted in the investigation of a complaint. The Complaint Resolution Officer will also maintain a confidential file for each complaint consisting of a complete set of documents, records and reports relating to a complaint. Duplicate documents will be destroyed.

The Complaint Resolution Officer will issue an annual report that summarizes and analyzes all complaints registered against BACI within the previous year.

### ***The Appeal Process***

Complainants have 30 days to appeal to the Complaint Resolution Officer. The Complaint Resolution Officer must respond in writing within 14 days of receiving the appeal. The Complaint Resolution Officer's decision is final and will be documented. The decision will be communicated to all related stakeholders.

BACI will advise the complainant of his or her options in pursuing the complaint with external agencies or offices.