

Purpose and Commitment

Wellchild Niagara is committed to providing safe, respectful, and high-quality programs, services, and interactions for children, families, staff, volunteers, partners, and the broader community. This Complaint Policy outlines a fair, transparent, and accessible process for receiving, addressing, and resolving concerns or complaints related to the organization's programs, services, conduct, or operations.

Wellchild Niagara views complaints as an opportunity to listen, learn, and improve, and is committed to addressing concerns in a timely, respectful, and confidential manner.

Scope

This policy applies to complaints raised by program participants, parents or guardians, members, donors, staff, volunteers, partners, or members of the public regarding the conduct of individuals acting on behalf of Wellchild Niagara or the delivery of its programs and services.

This policy does not replace or override legal reporting obligations, including those related to child protection, safety, or criminal matters, which must be addressed in accordance with applicable law and organizational policies.

Definition of a Complaint

A complaint is an expression of dissatisfaction or concern about the actions, decisions, conduct, or services of Wellchild Niagara, where a response or resolution is expected. Complaints may relate to program quality, communication, behaviour, safety, accessibility, or organizational practices.

How Complaints May Be Raised

Complaints should be raised as soon as reasonably possible and may be made verbally or in writing. Wherever appropriate, individuals are encouraged to raise concerns directly with the Executive Director to support early and informal resolution.

Complaints may be submitted via email to wellchildniagara@gmail.com or by submitting a feedback form on <https://www.wellchildniagara.com/feedback>

Effective Date: January 1, 2026

Last Reviewed: December 13, 2025

Complaint Handling and Resolution

The Executive Director is responsible for receiving and responding to complaints in a fair, impartial, and timely manner. All complaints will be acknowledged, reviewed, and addressed with care and respect. The process may include gathering relevant information, speaking with involved parties, and determining appropriate next steps or corrective actions.

Where a complaint involves the Executive Director, or where an individual does not feel comfortable raising a concern directly with the Executive Director, the complaint may be directed to the **Board of Directors**.

Wellchild Niagara will make reasonable efforts to resolve complaints promptly, recognizing that timelines may vary depending on the nature and complexity of the concern.

Confidentiality and Fairness

Complaints will be handled confidentially to the extent possible, with information shared only as necessary to assess and resolve the issue. All individuals involved in a complaint process will be treated with respect and fairness, and no assumptions of fault will be made prior to review.

Protection from Retaliation

Wellchild Niagara does not tolerate retaliation against any individual who raises a concern or complaint in good faith. Any act of retaliation will be treated as a serious breach of organizational policy and may result in corrective action.

Relationship to Other Policies

Where a complaint involves issues related to child safety, harassment, discrimination, privacy, or ethical conduct, the complaint may be addressed in conjunction with other applicable organizational policies, including the Child Protection Policy, Code of Ethics and Conduct, Privacy Policy, or Conflict of Interest Policy.

Record-Keeping and Continuous Improvement

Effective Date: January 1, 2026

Last Reviewed: December 13, 2025

Complaints and their outcomes will be documented and retained in accordance with organizational record-keeping practices and legal requirements. Trends or recurring issues may be reviewed by leadership and the Board to support continuous improvement in programs and operations.

Responsibility and Review

The Executive Director is responsible for the implementation of this policy, with oversight by the Board of Directors. This policy will be reviewed periodically and updated as necessary to ensure it remains responsive, effective, and aligned with legal requirements and best practices.