

# GRIEVANCE POLICY

# ATHENS COUNTY CHILDREN SERVICES

## Athens County Children Services

### Mission Statement

**Protecting Children**

**Strengthening Families**

**Securing Futures**

**ACCS encourages anyone who has a complaint or concern to first address it with their caseworker or supervisor.**

**Open communication is the first step in resolving many differences and problems.**

**The grievant has the right to express concerns and to receive a prompt explanation concerning the provision of services.**

**GRIEVANCE  
POLICY  
FOR  
ADOPTIVE APPLICANTS,  
PROSPECTIVE ADOPTIVE  
PARENTS, AND  
ADOPTIVE PARENTS**

Contact us for more information:  
Phone: (740) 592-3061  
Fax: (740) 593-3880  
[www.athenschilchildrenservices.com](http://www.athenschilchildrenservices.com)



**Athens County  
Children Services**

# PURPOSE AND PROCEDURES

## PURPOSE

To provide the foster parent(s) with a specific grievance policy and procedure to formally address complaints with the agency.

You must file a grievance no later than thirty calendar days after the event, or learning of the event.

Please refer to the agency MEPA Complaint Policy for information on filing complaints of alleged discriminatory acts, policies, or practices in the foster care or adoption process that involve race, color, or national origin (Ohio Administrative Code Rule 5101:2-33-03).

## PROCEDURES

**Step 1:** The adoptive applicant(s), prospective parent(s), and adoptive parent(s) should discuss complaints with the assigned caseworker.

**Step 2:** If the complaint is not resolved in Step 1, the adoptive applicant(s), prospective parent(s), and adoptive parent(s) should contact the caseworker's immediate supervisor to discuss the situation. The supervisor will investigate the concern and report back, in writing, and conduct a face-to-face meeting within thirty days of the receipt of the request.

**Step 3:** If these steps have not resolved the problem satisfactorily, the adoptive applicant(s), prospective parent(s), and adoptive parent(s) should request an agency review.

The review shall occur within thirty days of receipt of the request. The review shall include a face-to-face meeting with the adoptive applicant, prospective adoptive family and adoptive families requesting an agency review, the adoptive family caseworker, and the Executive Director or their designee.

**Step 4:** A written decision, including the reason for the decision, shall be rendered by the Executive Director or their designee. The decision shall be based upon the evidence presented at the review. A copy of the decision shall be provided to all parties of the agency review within fifteen days of review.

**Step 5:** If the complainant is dissatisfied with the local agency decision, the adoptive applicant(s), prospective parent(s), and adoptive parent(s) may request a hearing by the district office of the Ohio Department of Job and Family Services (ODJFS). This office can review a case after the county complaint process has been followed. When ODJFS reviews a case, it looks at whether Ohio law and administrative procedures were followed.

*Note: ODJFS has no authority to change or overturn any decision of the children services agency or the court; and due to confidentiality restrictions, ODJFS cannot provide you any case-specific information.*

## ODJFS Help Desk

**Email: [Help-Desk-OCF@jfs.ohio.gov](mailto:Help-Desk-OCF@jfs.ohio.gov)**

**Phone: 1-866-886-3537**

## OTHER PROVISIONS

To communicate the review or grievance policy to all individuals, the agency will provide an interpreter for individuals who primarily speak a language other than English, and for individuals with a hearing and/or visual impairment.

Athens County Children Services shall document in the case record the complaint, the complaint review process, and the findings of the complaint review.

A copy of this grievance policy will be forwarded to the grievant within three working days of their request.