

GRIEVANCE POLICY

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 denial, termination, or change of foster home certification. If dissatisfied with the agency decision, the matter can be appealed through the regular agency channels as outlined in this pamphlet and, if needed, to the Children Services licensing section of the Ohio Department of Job and Family Services.

-OR-

Issues concerning the implementation of the case plan and services to a foster child placed in the foster home.

Updated 06/16/2023

Athens County Children Services

Mission Statement

**Protecting Children
Strengthening Families
Securing Futures**

Contact us for more information:
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ATHENS COUNTY CHILDREN SERVICES

**GRIEVANCE
POLICY
FOR
FOSTER CAREGIVERS
AND
FOSTER CAREGIVER
APPLICANTS**



*Athens County
Children Services*

PURPOSE AND PROCEDURES

PURPOSE

To provide the foster caregiver(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 foster caregiver(s) should discuss complaints with the assigned caseworker.

Step 2: If the complaint is not resolved in Step 1, the foster caregiver(s) should contact the caseworker's immediate supervisor to discuss the situation. The supervisor will investigate the concern and report back, in writing, to the foster caregiver(s) within five working days of receiving the complaint.

Step 3: If these steps have not resolved the problem satisfactorily, the foster caregiver(s) may file a formal written grievance with the Executive Director. A grievance committee will be assembled and will schedule a meeting within five working days.

The grievance committee shall be chaired by the Deputy Director and consist of the following members:

- One Placement caseworker;
- One Family Services supervisor;
- Two foster caregivers, one of whom shall be an officer of the Athens County Foster Parents Association; and
- Either the Permanency or Protective Services Manager

Step 4: The grievance committee will have the functions of fact finding and recommendations to the Executive Director. The foster caregiver(s) may be present at the grievance committee meeting and may invite other persons if they wish. If a foster caregiver would like to bring an attorney, they must notify the agency 24 hours prior to the meeting so that an agency attorney can be present. The meeting will not proceed if notice is not given regarding an attorney or unless the attorney removes themselves from the grievance meeting.

Within three working days after the meeting, the grievance committee shall submit a written recommendation to the Executive Director with copies to the foster caregiver and other involved parties.

Step 5: The Executive Director will review the grievance and recommendations and decide. A written response of said grievance will be sent to the foster caregiver(s) within thirty days from the date the grievance was filed.

Step 6: If dissatisfied with the local agency decision, the foster caregiver(s) may request a hearing by the district office of the Ohio Department of Job and Family Services.

ODJFS Help Desk

Email: 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.