

THE BABY FOLD ADOPTION CLIENT
GRIEVANCE PROCESS
August 2011

General

In the event that any client served by The Baby Fold has a grievance with the agency, an agency employee, or any authorized representative of the agency, that individual has the right to submit a grievance. These clients include biological parents, adopted persons and adoptive parents. All clients are provided a copy of the adoption client's grievance procedure at the time services are initiated in the following programs: International Adoption, Special Needs Adoption and Post Legal Adoption. A receipt letter stating the client has received the grievance process will be signed/dated by the client and witnessed by the assigned caseworker. The caseworker will place a copy of this receipt letter in the client's file.

Each client has the right to submit a grievance to The Baby Fold regarding personal dissatisfaction with decisions or treatment that affects them. Decisions made by a court or regulatory body (i.e. Department of Children & Family Services) cannot be addressed by the agency. Clients that are dissatisfied with a court or regulatory body decision must pursue avenues of appeal provided by those entities. You can ask your caseworker for assistance in filing your grievance with the correct authority in these cases.

It is the hope of The Baby Fold that each grievance will be successfully handled by the employee(s) who are closest to the client and to the situation. Clients are encouraged to resolve grievances through direction communication with their caseworker whenever possible. If this communication fails to resolve the grievance further steps may be taken as outlined in the process described below. The grievance process shall be done fairly and without intimidation. The Baby Fold does not take any action to discourage a client or prospective client from, or retaliate against a client or prospective client for: making a complaint, expressing a grievance, providing information in writing or interviews to an accrediting entity on the agency's or person's performance, or questioning the conduct of or expressing an opinion about the performance of an agency or person.

Clients maintain the right to file a written grievance at any time for any grievance of service provision or treatment, treatment planning, or staff misconduct. If at any time, a client is at risk of harm or danger, the process described below will be expedited to ensure safety and well-being.

I. Grievance process

When a client raises an issue:

- A. The client is given an opportunity to discuss the issue with The Baby Fold staff member involved.
- B. If the issue cannot be resolved, the client and The Baby Fold staff member will schedule an appointment with the staff member's supervisor and Department Director.
- C. The agency will attempt to resolve grievances within 10 business days of the initial grievance being made.
- D. At any point in the process a client has the right to file a written grievance.
- E. At the time a client expresses a desire to file a written grievance, each client is immediately provided with a copy of The Baby Fold's process to resolve grievances.
- F. All of the above steps, as well as a signed statement from the client that they have been notified about the grievance process, are to be documented in the case record.
- G. The Department Director will report any client grievances that have required their involvement in the grievance process to the Director of Quality and Information Services within 5 business days of the attempt to resolve the grievance.

H. An agency incident form will be used to document the nature of the grievance and outcomes.

II. Written grievance process

To file a written grievance, the client will complete the attached grievance form and send it to the Director of Quality and Information Services at the address stated on the form.

A. The grievance statement will include:

1. an identification of the issue or complaint
2. what action is requested to be taken by The Baby Fold to resolve the matter to the person's satisfaction

B. The Director of Quality and Information Services will contact The Department Director involved within 2 business days of receipt of written grievance to initiate the investigation. The Department Director will then complete the "Action Taken" section of the grievance form and send it to the Chief Executive Officer for the purpose of requesting a hearing with the Chief Executive Officer.

C. The Chief Executive Officer, or acting Chief Executive Officer, is to convene a meeting with the client filing the grievance within five business days and notify the client in writing of the day, time, and place of the meeting.

D. The Chief Executive Officer will respond to the client grievance in writing within ten business days from the date the written grievance was received.

E. The client may file an appeal if the grievance cannot be resolved to the client's satisfaction with the Chief Executive Officer.

F. If an appeal is filed, The Chief Executive Officer is to convene a meeting of the Program Committee of the Board of Directors within five business days and notify the person appealing in writing of the day, time, and place of the meeting.

G. After meeting with the person appealing and hearing the appeal, the Program Committee chair will notify the person in writing of the decision no later than 10 business days of the date the appeal was received. The decision of the Program Committee will be the final decision.

H. All grievances, responses, and Grievance Forms will be kept in an administrative file and maintained by the Chief Executive Officer. A copy of all responses to grievances will be placed in the client record.

I. The Director of Quality and Information Services shall report, in writing, to the Department of Children & Family Services Regional Licensing Office/the agency's licensing representative within 10 business days after a grievance is received and report the resolution, if any.

III. Other formal mechanisms

A. Adoption applicants or service recipients may file also file a grievance with the State of Illinois and the Department of Children & Family Services (DCFS) by contacting the nearest DCFS licensing office to lodge their grievance.

B. For International Adoption applicants or service recipients, The Baby Fold provides to adoption clients information regarding the Hague Complaint Registry at the time of initial application. Applicants are informed that they may lodge a complaint against the agency at any time they feel there is an issue related to the Hague Convention on Intercountry Adoption, The Intercountry Adoption Act, or the regulations implementing the Intercountry Adoption Act.

C. All clients being served through Illinois Department of Children and Family Services contracted programs are provided with a service appeal brochure at the time an initial service plan is developed, at each subsequent service plan revision/administrative case review, and any time that a critical decision is made. Clients are notified that they must file a service appeal to retain their

rights through that specific appeal process. Staff should refer to DCFS Rule 337 – Service Appeal Process.

- D. Clients who wish to appeal indicated child abuse or neglect findings should not use the above process described in Part II above to appeal such a finding. Clients will be notified by DCFS at the time of an indicated finding of the appeal procedure. Staff should refer to DCFS Rule 336 appeal process for further information.

**Receipt of The Baby Fold Adoption Client
Grievance Process**

I/We, _____, confirm that we have received
from our caseworker, _____, The Baby Fold's Adoption
Client Grievance Process and have reviewed it in my/our caseworker's presence.

I/We confirm that we understand the procedure and all questions have been
answered to our satisfaction.

Adoption Client

Date

Adoption Client

Date

Witness

Date

AD.15 b
10/11/07, LJR

GRIEVANCE FORM

Name of person filing grievance: _____

Describe the Problem: _____

How would you like the problem resolved? _____

Signature of person filing grievance

Date

Please send this form to: Debi Armstrong, Director of Quality and Information Services at The Baby Fold, 108 E. Willow, Normal, IL 61761.