

**Cuyahoga County Division of Children and Family Services  
(CCDCFS)  
Policy Statement**

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| <b>Policy Chapter:</b> | <b>Client Rights</b> |
| <b>Policy Number:</b>  | <b>7.06.03</b>       |
| <b>Policy Name:</b>    | <b>Client Rights</b> |

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| <b>Original Effective Date:</b> | 05/07/2008                         |
| <b>Revision Date(s):</b>        | 03/01/2022, 01/01/2019, 06/30/2008 |
| <b>Current Revision Date:</b>   | 03/01/2025                         |
| <b>Approved By:</b>             | Jacqueline M. Fletcher             |

**PURPOSE:** To provide a basic understanding of the rights of individuals who are involved with CCDCFS.

**SCOPE:** This policy applies to all CCDCFS staff and the children and families that it serves.

**POLICY**

It is the policy of CCDCFS to respect the rights of all individuals who are involved with CCDCFS, and to treat them with dignity and respect.

**PROCEDURES**

Persons involved with CCDCFS maintain rights. The following is a list of some of those rights. If you have any questions concerning these rights, clients may either contact their worker of record (WOR), supervisor, or other person in the WOR's chain of command; or clients may contact the Customer Relations Unit at (216) 432-CARE (2273).

In General: *Clients have a Right to:*

- receive services in the least restrictive, most humane setting feasible.
- agree to, or refuse, services.
- be advised of their rights and to ensure that the client understands his/her rights; the worker of the record (WOR) shall make a notation in the family case record.
- discuss concerns about your rights with CCDCFS workers.
- participate in the CCDCFS decision making process, except as otherwise provided by law.
- receive an explanation of any decisions, proposed or taken by CCDCFS, involving yourself or your child.
- an opportunity to be heard during all aspects of your involvement with CCDCFS.

- to receive verbal and written notification to work with CCDCFS in jointly developing, implementing and reviewing the case plan for you and your child, and to be provided a copy of the case plan.
- access and review information related to yourself or child that is contained in the CCDCFS case record, so long as such access is not limited by law, and excepting specific information that would pose a significant risk of harm to others.
- confidentiality within the limitations and requirements of federal and Ohio laws, rules or court orders.
- regular and frequent visitation with your child, unless it is not in the best interests of the child or limited or not permitted by a court order.

In regard to the Provision of Services: *Clients have a Right to:*

- have the privacy of your child’s information respected, except as otherwise provided by law.
- have the privacy of your information respected, except as otherwise provided by law.
- have the privacy of your family’s information respected, except as otherwise provided by law.
- be informed and authorize written consent to disclosure of confidential or private information when CCDCFS is legally or ethically required to release such information, except as otherwise provided by law.
- be informed and authorize written consent prior to recording or filming for purposes other than identification, diagnosis, or treatment, or as required by law.
- receive a copy of their signed consent for release of information form. CCDCFS shall place a copy of the written consent in the client’s case record.
- Children also have certain rights, including to be nurtured and live safely in their home. Children who are subject to a court order related to child protection may have additional rights.

In regard to Civil Rights: *Clients have a Right to:*

- receive services without regard to race, color, religion, disability, age, sex, including sexual orientation and gender identity, political affiliation or belief, or national origin.
- be provided assistance, including a foreign language or American Sign Language interpreter, and document translation free of charge, if you have a speech or hearing impairment or have limited English proficiency.

In regard to investigations: *Clients have a Right to:*

- be informed, at the time of initial contact by a CCDCFS representative, of the allegations against you.
- receive a document advising you of the outcome of the CCDCFS investigation of allegations of child abuse, neglect, or dependency.
- appeal an “indicated” or “substantiated” report disposition against you.

### Addressing Client Concerns:

Any client who believes his/her rights have been violated in the delivery of services has the right to address those concerns according to agency policy. Clients have the right to have their concerns addressed without concern for retaliation.

Service complaints should be addressed first to the worker or supervisor and then by the Customer Relations Unit if resolution with the worker is not satisfactory.

Civil Rights complaints can be filed with the Customer Relations Unit, the agency Civil Rights Coordinator or filed directly with the Ohio Department of Job and Family Services or the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.

### **SEE ALSO:**

#### **Ohio Administrative Code Sections**

- 5180:2-33-20 PCSA complaint review and report disposition appeal policy
- 5180:2-33-21 Confidentiality and dissemination of child welfare information
- 5180:2-36 Screening and Investigation

#### **Cuyahoga County Division of Children and Family Services Policies and Procedures Manual**

- Policy 7.06.01 Agency Civil Rights Plan, Clients' Civil Rights and Procedures
- Policy 7.06.02 Rights of Children in Agency, Foster, or Residential Care
- Policy 7.06.04 Provisions for Clients with Limited English Proficiency (LEP)
- Policy 7.06.05 Non-Discrimination Policy: Youth and Families
- Policy 10.06.10 Responding to Concerns/and or Complaints