

Families Through Adoption, Inc.

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Complaint Policies and Procedures

Hague Regulations CRR

96.41 (a), 96.41 (b), 96.41 (c), 96.41 (d), 96.41 (e), 96.41 (f), 96.41 (g)

STATE OF MICHIGAN LICENSING RULE R 400.12210 Grievance handling

POLICY:

Families Through Adoption (FTA) will provide for a fair and efficient process for resolving grievances. FTA permits any birth parent, prospective adoptive parent, adoptive parent, or adoptee to lodge directly with FTA signed and dated complaints about any of the services or activities of FTA (including its use of supervised providers) that he or she believes raise an issue of compliance with the Hague convention, Intercountry Adoption Act of 2000, the Universal Accreditation Act, State licensing requirements, or the Hague Regulations, and FTA advises such individuals of the additional procedures available to them if they are dissatisfied with FTA's response to their complaint. There is not a deadline for receiving complaints. FTA will not take any action to discourage a client or prospective client from making a complaint, expressing a grievance, questioning the conduct of, or expressing an opinion about the performance of the Agency or any person acting on behalf of the agency.

PURPOSE:

To ensure that all family members receiving FTA services have a right to a fair and efficient process for resolving grievances and disputes related to the charge, processes, findings, services, and/or recommendations provided by the agency's staff.

HAGUE REGULATIONS:

FTA will file with IAAME a report on a semi-annual basis which records complaints about any of the services or activities of the agency (including its use of supervised providers) that raise an issue of compliance with the Convention, the IAA or the regulations implementing the IA.

FTA will respond in writing to complaints received pursuant to paragraph (b) of Hague Regulations 96.41 within thirty days of receipt, and provides expedited review of such complaints that are time-sensitive or that involve allegations of fraud.

FTA will maintain a written record of each complaint received pursuant to paragraph (b) of Hague Regulations 96.41 and the steps taken to investigate and respond to it and makes this record available to the accrediting entity or the Secretary upon request.

FTA will 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

performance; or questioning the conduct of or expressing an opinion about the performance of an agency.

FTA will provide to the accrediting entity and the Secretary, on a semi-annual basis, a summary of all complaints received pursuant to paragraph (b) of Hague Regulations 96.41 during the preceding six months (including the number of complaints received and how each complaint was resolved) and an assessment of any discernible patterns in complaints received against the agency pursuant to paragraph (b) of Hague Regulations 96.41, along with information about what systemic changes, if any, were made or are planned by the agency in response to such patterns.

FTA will provide any information about complaints received pursuant to paragraph (b) of Hague Regulations 96.41 as may be requested by the accrediting entity or the Secretary.

PROCEDURE:

The grievance policy will be explained to the families, and they will be required to sign the form confirming that this has been done. FTA will provide to prospective adoptive parents the ***Complaint Policy and Procedures*** with the initial information package.

These procedures are also listed on the Agency website. Clients will also receive notice of this policy in the initial marketing materials, as part of the new client paperwork (see ***Rights and Responsibilities of Client and Privacy Practices***) and in the signed ***Adoption Services Contract***.

Adult family members have four options which they may use to facilitate remediation of a grievance:

1. They are encouraged to discuss their concern with any staff at any time and request assistance with remedying the situation. FTA staff will attempt to resolve the issue using reasonably appropriate interventions or actions.
2. If the disagreement involves concerns about documentation, they may file in writing a written “correction” which will be attached to the document in FTA files. FTA may choose to not amend documentation produced by the organization, but anytime FTA discloses the FTA document, the family’s statement will automatically be disclosed simultaneously.
3. They may utilize a formal grievance procedure within FTA. FTA will attempt to resolve the issue using informal methods. If the family chooses to proceed with the formal grievance procedure, the Social Worker Supervisor will remind the family that the grievance must be put in writing and submitted to FTA. The formal grievance procedure is described immediately hereunder:
 - a. Any adult member of the family is encouraged to discuss any concerns or grievances with any FTA staff at any time.
 - b. Should such conversation not result in a satisfactory outcome from the family’s point of view, they may put their concern(s)/ grievance(s) in writing and submit that written grievance to the Social Worker Supervisor at FTA.
 - c. The supervisor will contact the family and respond in writing within 10 business days of receipt of the grievance.

- d. Should the family still wish to grieve the issue, they may resubmit a written request to the FTA director who will again respond in writing within 10 business days of receipt.
 - e. The Board of Directors holds the last decision and can be contacted in writing after the family has received what they consider to be an unsatisfactory response from the director. Select members of the Board will meet with the family within 25 business days of receipt of the written grievance. They will document their findings in meeting minutes.
4. The family may contact the local office of the State of Michigan’s Department of Human Services and file a complaint with the licensing officials.
 - a. The local contact person is Kathy Fiorletta, and her phone number is 616-490-5356. The State number is 866-856-0126.
 5. Finally, the family may lodge a complaint with the Hague Complaint Registry in accordance with Hague Regulation 96.70 as described at the following website: <http://adoptionusca.state.gov/HCRWeb/WelcomeForm.aspx>. Please note that the accrediting entity assigned to review and resolve complaints will verify that the complaining person has already attempted to seek resolution through the Agency’s internal procedures prior to consideration.

Failure of the complaining person to respond shall constitute an acceptance of the response, deemed response or corrective action taken by FTA. The complaining person and FTA may, by mutual written agreement, consent to an extension of time.

FTA’s responsibilities in the grievance procedure include:

1. Respond to grievances in a timely manner as specified above. (This includes acknowledging receipt of the grievance to the family and/or including any written dispute attached to FTA documents.)
2. Provide an opportunity to the family to examine the case file including any documents considered in the process.
3. Provide reasonable assistance accessing agency staff.
4. Maintain documentation relating to a grievance in the case file.
5. Document receipt of verbal or written grievances for quality improvement purposes.
6. Review disputes, complaints, and grievances as part of the quality improvement program to identify opportunities for improvement.

Policy approved:	On:	Procedures approved:	On:
FTA Board	June 1, 2006	Char Lanning, Executive Director	June 20, 2006
Revisions:			
		Char Lanning, Executive Director	July 11, 2006
		Char Lanning, Executive Director	January 11, 2014
FTA Board	-----	Char Lanning, Executive Director	January 26, 2019

Department of State: