

## PURPOSE

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

Grievances must be filed within thirty (30) days of disposition notification to be considered for review.

*Please refer to 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.*

## PROCEDURES

**Step 1:** The adoptive applicant(s), prospective parent(s), and adoptive parent(s) should discuss the complaint 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 immediate supervisor to discuss the situation. The supervisor will investigate the concern and report back, verbally or in writing, and conduct a face-to-face meeting within thirty days of the receipt of the request.

**Step 3:** If the complaint is not resolved in Step 2, 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 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 of ACCS or his/her designee.

**Step 4:** A written decision, including the reason for the decision, shall be rendered by the Executive Director of ACCS or his or her 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. The Ohio Department of Job and Family Services (ODJFS) 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. 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.

If you have followed the county complaint process and believe that the law was not followed, you may request an administrative review by calling the Help Desk at 1-866-635-3748.

## OTHER PROVISIONS

In order to communicate the review/grievance policy to all individuals, the agency will provide an interpreter for individuals who speak a language other than English. Consultants from the Services for the Visually Impaired and Services for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing will be provided by the agency for individuals who are visually or hearing impaired.

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 his or her request.

Athens County Children Services  
PO Box 1046  
18 Stonybrook Drive  
Athens, OH 45701  
Phone (740) 592-3061  
Fax (740) 593-3880  
[www.athenschilchildrenservices.com](http://www.athenschilchildrenservices.com)

## Grievance Policy:

This agency encourages anyone who has a complaint or concern to first address it with his or her caseworker or supervisor. Open communication is the first step in resolving many differences and problems.

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

Athens County Children Services  
Mission Statement

**Protecting Children  
Strengthening Families  
Securing Futures**

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

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Athens County Children Services

## Grievance Policy

For Adoptive Applicants,  
Prospective Adoptive Parents,  
and Adoptive Parents

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**Athens County  
Children Services**

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