

## 3.1 Client Code of Conduct and Complaint Procedure Policy

### Intent:

CMHA - Central Alberta Region seeks to continually provide a welcoming and comfortable environment which ensures trust and respect for all clients, visitors, staff, and volunteers. CMHA - Central Alberta Region strives to provide clients with a safe environment to grieve, regardless of culture or religious beliefs. In order to maintain our longstanding reputation in the community, we have established this Client Code of Conduct Policy to specify our expectations.

### Guidelines:

#### Expectations of our Clients

All clients of CMHA - Central Alberta Region are expected to treat our employees, other clients and visitors with the utmost respect and dignity while on company property. CMHA - Central Alberta Region strictly forbids discrimination or harassment of any kind, whether based on race, colour, national origin, religion, creed, sex, age, physical, mental or developmental disability, marital status, sexual orientation, political ideology or any other reason. Harassment may include unsolicited or unwelcome remarks, gestures, or physical contact, as well as the display or circulation of inappropriate or derogatory written materials or pictures.

The following is a list of behaviours, (although not exclusive) that will not be tolerated:

- Physical violence;
- Verbal abuse;
- Profanity;
- Any form of harassment;
- Intimidation tactics and/or making threats;
- Malicious or harmful statements about others;
- Public disclosure of another's private information;
- Possession of dangerous or unauthorized material; and
- Solicitation, purchase or selling of illegal substances.

Clients and/or visitors who display any of the listed behaviours may be asked to leave the premises.

A staff member or volunteer who witnesses or is made aware of any possible misconduct as mentioned above shall immediately attend to the welfare of the individual, if it is safe for them to do so. The staff or volunteer shall inform their immediate supervisor promptly and the Executive Director.

In the case of an abuse claim; the Executive Director shall:

- a) Ensure the safety and wellbeing of the individual, if it is safe to do so.
- b) If the situation involves a staff member. The disciplinary policies shall apply.
- c) In a situation involving an external agency, the incident will be reported to that agencies' management.
- d) In a situation allegedly involving a member of the public, the incident will be reported to the correct authorities (Child Services, RCMP).
- e) An individual who has reasonable and probable grounds to believe that there has been abuse of an individual or client must immediately report the incident to the Executive Director and proper authorities.

An employee, volunteer or student who witnesses or is aware of abuse or misconduct as stated above and fails to report this action will themselves be subject to disciplinary action up to and including termination.

Anyone reporting an incident of misconduct, filing a report or giving advice in good faith will not be penalized for doing so.

**Violations:** The safety and security of the CMHA - Central Alberta Region employees, clients and visitors is of utmost importance. This policy is strictly enforced and non-compliance will result in corrective measures being undertaken.

The Executive Director and staff of CMHA - Central Alberta Region reserve the right to exclude any person from accessing services as a consequence of violating this policy.

### **Client Complaints**

At CMHA - Central Alberta Region we value our clients and what they have to say about the service they receive. We take all complaints seriously as they assist us to improve our products, services and client service.

We are committed to consistent, fair and confidential complaint handling and to resolving complaints as quickly as possible. We aim to make it easy for people to make a complaint if they are dissatisfied and we will treat all clients making a complaint equally and with respect.

### **Recording Procedure:**

When a client is making a complaint to a staff member, they will be asked to confirm that this is a formal complaint. If they would like to proceed with a formal complaint, the details of the complaint will be written down clearly by the staff member taking the complaint. Form 2.02 Should be used to document details of the complaint.

All formal complaints must be documented and retained on file. When taking a complaint, staff will record the name and contact details of the client, as well as full and accurate details of the complaint, including the date and time. Details of all communication with the client and any actions to resolve the complaint will be recorded in the same place.

Clients' personal details or details of their complaint will not be divulged to third parties or any employee not involved with the complaint directly unless prior written consent of the client has been received (or required by the police or legal authorities).

**Responding to Complaints:**

Where possible, complaints will be resolved at the first point of contact. Complaints that are solved immediately will still be recorded, as outlined above.

If the complaint can't be resolved immediately, the complaint will be passed on to the immediate supervisor of the person the complaint is regarding. The Supervisor and/or Program Manager will work to resolve the complaint by communicating directly with all parties in determining an acceptable resolution to the situation.

**Informing Clients of Progress:**

All complaints will receive a response within 10 business days.

Clients will be informed of any changes to services as a result of their complaint.

**Escalation of Complaints:**

If a client is not satisfied with the resolution of the complaint it may be referred to the Executive Director. The client will be informed and given an amended timeframe for resolution.