

Catholic Charities strives to offer the highest quality services to our families (including birth parents, prospective adoptive parents, adoptive parents, or an adoptee), characterized by mutual regard and dignity. To that end, you should expect that our staff, at all levels of the agency, treat you in a respectful manner. Some examples include:

- Treating each person we encounter in a caring and respectful manner. This includes respecting an individual's cultural, spiritual, or social values.
- Allowing clients to make decisions about the services they receive.
- Notifying you if an appointment needs to be cancelled or rescheduled, or if we are going to be more than 15 minutes late.
- Protecting your personal and family information by taking specific steps to secure our written records and not disclosing information without specific written consent.

Catholic Charities understands that there may be times when you disagree with a decision we have made regarding you or your family, or feel you have been treated unfairly or disrespectfully. When this occurs, we encourage you to express your viewpoint to the staff that is directly related to your case. Each of our staff has a supervisor, and you are also encouraged to discuss your thoughts with this person if you feel it is appropriate to do so. We will address your concerns with you and the staff involved in a timely manner.

If, after you have spoken to our assigned staff and their supervisor and you feel the situation has not been resolved to your satisfaction, you may initiate a more formal complaint resolution procedure in writing. Written complaints should be directed to the attention of the Maternity-Adoption Department Director, and will be handled in a timely manner. Within two business days, the Maternity-Adoption Department Director will work in conjunction with the Associate Vice President to develop a plan to investigate the complaint and report the outcomes to agency administration, the appropriate adoption authorities, and to you, as appropriate. Please understand that if we must take disciplinary action against an employee, that action is confidential. A report of the outcome of the complaint investigation will be submitted in writing to the DCFS regional licensing office or DCFS Licensing Representative within 10 business days after the complaint was received and/or to appropriate Convention authorities. A written response to the client who filed the grievance will be sent within 30 days of receipt, unless it is time sensitive or involves allegations of fraud.

Catholic Charities administration encourages two-way communication between staff and clients. This open communication allows us to continue to improve our services and remain responsive to the wide-ranging needs of the people we serve. You have the right to expect that neither Catholic Charities nor its staff should discourage you from filing a complaint, and will not retaliate or discriminate against you if you choose to bring a complaint to our attention.

*Additionally, for international adoptions, the United States Department of State maintains a Hague Complaint Registry; for more information please visit their website.*

<http://travel.state.gov/content/adoptionsabroad/en/hague-convention/agency-accreditation/hague-complaint-registry.html>