

CLIENT GRIEVANCE

1. The “CHI Commitment to Excellence” is sent with this form and with our Adoption Agreement to every Adoptive parent.
2. Children’s Hope permits any birth parent, prospective adoptive parent or adoptive parent, or adoptee to lodge, sign and date complaints about any services or activities of Children’s Hope, including any supervised providers, that the client believes raise an issue of compliance with the Hague Convention, the Inter-Country Adoption Act (IAA), or the regulations implementing the IAA. Children’s Hope families will receive the Client Grievance Procedures at the time the Children’s Hope Agency Agreement is presented to the family.
3. Any client wishing to formally register a written/verbal grievance, or an appeal of an unfavorable home study assessment, should communicate this fact to their assigned direct service worker. Upon receiving notice of a client’s wish to register a grievance, a meeting will be scheduled immediately with the client and the program supervisor of the client’s assigned direct service worker. The direct service worker may also be present. This meeting will be scheduled within 10 working days of the verbal or written receipt of the complaint. The meeting may take place by phone if it is not possible for all parties to meet in a CHI office. Children’s Hope will respond in writing to the Grievance within 30 days of receipt, and will provide expedited review of grievances that are time sensitive or that involve allegations of fraud. A written record of the grievance will commence with the first meeting, including the steps to investigate and respond to the grievance. The written record will be continued until the matter is resolved. Children’s Hope will make the written record of the grievance available to the accrediting entity and the U.S. State Department upon request.
4. It is hoped that the meeting will resolve the grievance. In the event that it does not, the client will be requested to send a written grievance within 30 days of the meeting to the Executive Director of CHI. Assistance to do so will be provided, if requested. The client will be advised that if the letter is not received within 30 days, the agency will close the matter. The supervisor will notify the Executive Director of the initial meeting and the potential written grievance. If the grievance has not been received within 30 days, the program supervisor will send a letter of closure. Upon receipt of the written grievance, the Executive Director will notify the program supervisor and the program supervisor will send a letter to the client acknowledging the receipt of a grievance. The program supervisor will review the situation from various perspectives for compliance and present the Executive Director with written recommendations for resolution of the grievance.
5. The Executive Director will schedule a meeting with the Client Grievance Committee to review the recommendations and determine the proposed resolution. The Client Grievance Committee consists of - the relevant Program/Branch Director, the Executive Director, and agency employees with no prior contact with the client filing the grievance. The Executive Director will convey the decision of the committee in writing to the client within 30 days following the receipt of the written grievance. If the client accepts the proposed resolution, the client shall acknowledge his/her agreement

by signing a copy of the written proposed resolution and returning the signed copy to the Agency.

6. If the matter still remains unresolved, a client can make a written appeal to the Board of Directors. The client will be notified that he/she has a maximum of 30 days from the date of the report by the Executive Director to make this response in writing. The Board of Directors shall consider the matter at the next regularly scheduled board meeting. A final written determination shall be transmitted to the client and the Executive Director within 10 days of the board meeting.
7. The client's services are not to be denied, reduced, suspended or terminated for exercising his/her grievance rights.
8. Children's Hope 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 agency on Children's Hope's performance; or questioning the conduct of or expressing an opinion about the performance of Children's Hope.
9. Children's Hope provides to the accrediting entity and the Secretary, on a semi-annual basis, a summary of all complaints received (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, along with information about what systemic changes, if any, were made or are planned by the agency in response to such patterns.
10. Children's Hope provides any information about complaints received as may be requested by the accrediting entity or the Secretary.
11. Children's Hope has a quality improvement program that reports quarterly in efforts to improve our adoption services as needed. Children's Hope uses quality improvement methods such as reviewing complaint data, using client satisfaction surveys (each family receives a survey link at the completion of your adoption) or comparing our practices and performance against the data contained in the Secretary's annual reports to Congress on inter-country adoption.

During the grievance procedure, the client has a right to contact the following if they are dissatisfied with Children's Hope response to their complaint:

1. Department of Children and Family Services in their state for assistance. CHI staff will offer assistance to the client by providing the address and telephone number of the Department of Children and Family Services.
2. The U.S. State Department Complaint Registry. Their contact information is:
http://adoption.state.gov/hague_convention/agency_accreditation/complaints.php