

Complaint Process Summary Report for the 70th L.J. Compliance Report

During the reporting period of January 1, 2023 through June 30, 2023 the Child Welfare Team received a total of twenty-eight L.J. class member complaints. Currently, all complaints, including those arising in situations involving a LJ Class member or non-class member, continue to be tracked by the Executive Assistant to one of the Assistant Deputy Directors of Child Welfare.

No changes have occurred to the complaint process since our latest response. The Baltimore City Department of Social Services, Court Process Team, is currently meeting and engaged in conversations to improve the Process which will be initiated at some point during the 72nd reporting period.

For the 70th reporting period all potential Complaint inquiries have been acknowledged by a member of the Child Welfare case team within one business day of receipt. The largest single source of these inquiries were initiated from the provider community including BCDSS licensed foster homes and therapeutic foster homes, accounting for ten of the complaints. The other major source of complaints came directly from daycare providers accounting for seven of the complaints. The other various sources of inquiries came from the foster parent ombudsman, childrens' attorneys, and biological parents.

The majority of inquiries received during this reporting period remain around payment issues, accounting for thirteen of the twenty-eight complaints. The majority of these complaints were received from day care providers inquiring about the time frame for payments to be received from the state. Many daycare providers believed they should be receiving payment upfront or more closely aligned to the period when services were provided. In these situations, Program Managers and Unit Managers reached out directly to the providers and explained the payment process. There were also a handful of situations where other types of payments were delayed for multiple reasons.

The additional sources of inquiries received remained under the umbrella of communications and customer service, which accounted for the remaining fifteen complaints. Often these complaints involved issues around delays in communication and customer service which were usually remedied quickly, and often were caused by staffing changes which have been more frequent because of the Covid pandemic.

The time frames involved in resolving these complaints varies on a case by case basis but each inquiry results in an immediate interaction with the appropriate case management team and deadlines as to the provision of information and necessary actions in order to achieve a rapid resolution of the problem.

BCDSS will continue to track complaints in order to improve all aspects of the services we provide to our children, youth and families.

