

Family Grievance Protocol

We are committed to open communication and quality care. If you have a concern about services, an incident, or an investigation outcome, we want to hear from you.

Open and direct communication is often the most effective way to resolve a concern. We encourage families to start the conversation with their child's provider, as most issues can be addressed quickly when raised early.

Your Rights as a Family

- Receive written information about our grievance process at the time of enrollment.
- File a grievance at any time without fear of retaliation.
- Request information about incident outcomes within HIPAA privacy limits.
- Have your preferred method of communication honored by staff.
- Be treated with dignity and respect throughout the grievance process.

How to Raise a Concern

Families are expected to attempt resolution at each level before escalating:

- 1 Talk to Your Provider**
Contact your child's teacher, therapist, or direct care staff. Most concerns are resolved promptly through direct conversation.
- 2 Contact the Program Director**
If the concern is not resolved within 5 business days, contact the Program Director for your child's program to request a formal review.
- 3 File a Formal Grievance**
If Steps 1 and 2 do not resolve your concern, contact the Compliance Officer to submit a formal grievance.

Grievance Contact Information

- Call: 414-345-6313
- Email: incidents@penfieldchildren.org
- Online: penfieldchildren.org

Privacy & Confidentiality

All client incident records are Protected Health Information under HIPAA and are treated as strictly confidential. Records are accessible only to authorized staff and are never shared without written consent, except as required by law. For children enrolled in federally funded educational programs, education records are additionally protected under the FERPA, which grants parents the right to inspect, review, and request amendments to their child's educational records.

Mandatory Reporting

All Penfield staff are mandatory reporters under Wisconsin law (Wis. Stat. §48.981). If child abuse or neglect is suspected, staff are required to report directly to Child Protective Services (CPS) at 414-220-SAFE, independent of any internal grievance process.

What Happens After You File

Your trust means everything to us. When you share a concern, we commit to handling it with the care and respect your family deserves.

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| T | Triage & Acknowledge
The Compliance Officer will acknowledge your concern and review it with the relevant Program Director and staff. |
| R | Review & Classify
The concern is classified and reviewed. Serious matters are escalated to the VP of Programs or CEO as needed. |
| U | Uncover & Investigate
A formal investigation is conducted as needed, with Legal Counsel involved for serious incidents. |
| S | Solve with Corrective Action
If a systemic issue is identified, a Corrective Action Plan is developed to prevent recurrence. |
| T | Tie to Closure
The grievance is formally closed once the investigation and corrective actions are complete and verified. |

No Retaliation

Penfield strictly prohibits retaliation against any family, child, or staff member who raises a concern, files a grievance, or makes a mandatory report. If you believe you have experienced retaliation, contact our Compliance office at 414-345-6313 immediately.

Your Family, Your Voice

- You will always be notified when an incident involves your child.
- You may request an update or outcome summary at any time.
- Your preferred method of contact will be honored, whether by phone, email, or in-person.
- All information shared with you is handled with full confidentiality in accordance with HIPAA.
- Your feedback is formally reviewed and may result in direct program improvements.