



Complaint Process

Why lodge a complaint?

Idaho Code 39-3556 requires the Department of Health and Welfare to investigate, or cause to be investigated, any complaint alleging a violation of regulations governing the Certified Family Home (CFH) program. Lodging a complaint notifies the department of concerns within a certified family home.

The department encourages those with concerns to first discuss them with the care provider (i.e., the adult responsible for maintaining the CFH). If the issue remains unresolved, lodging a complaint with the department will initiate a review of the concerns to determine if potential violations of regulations occurred. Should this review determine that the allegation involves noncompliance with CFH rules, the department will conduct an investigation into the allegations. If the concern is not related to CFH rules, the department may refer the complainant to another agency.

The investigation findings serve important purposes. First, the department addresses violations identified through this process with the care provider, who is required to make corrections. This leads to improved quality of care in the home. Second, when the department is unable to substantiate an allegation, the care provider is still made aware of the concern. This may lead to better quality assurance by the care provider.

How do I lodge a complaint?

You may either email the general CFH inbox at cfhcc@dhw.idaho.gov or call the regional certifying agent in your area below. Certifying agents take complaints involving certified family homes and conduct investigations.

Region 1	Coeur d'Alene Area	(208) 665-8807
Region 2	Lewiston Area	(208) 799-4438
Region 3	Nampa Area	(208) 455-7120
Region 4	Boise Area	(208) 334-0700
Region 5	Twin Falls Area	(208) 732-1515
Region 6	Pocatello Area	(208) 239-6249
Region 7	Idaho Falls Area	(208) 528-5721

What information will the certifying agent need?

The certifying agent will need the following information:

- The name and contact information of the complainant. The complainant may also choose not to give their name.

- The name of the care provider.
- The city in which the home is located.
- The name of the affected resident(s), if applicable.
- A detailed description of each specific incident of concern. Avoid general statements, such as “the resident is not treated well.”
- The date and time each incident occurred.
- Any negative outcome to the resident.
- Any evidence that may be useful in an investigation (e.g., audio/video recordings, photographs, text messages or emails, copies of documents, etc.)
- The names and contact information of others who may have witnessed the incident(s).

How will the complaint be investigated?

Each complaint is reviewed by the program manager and assigned a priority based on the nature of allegations. The certifying agent assigned to the complaint will initiate an investigation accordingly. The investigation is conducted per written protocols that emphasize timeliness, thoroughness, and objectivity. The department determines whether a preponderance of the evidence (i.e., evidence supporting the allegation is more convincing than that which opposes it) exists to substantiate the allegations.

If an allegation is unsubstantiated, that does not mean that the incident did not occur. It simply means that the investigative process did not uncover enough evidence to enable the department to act. If the concerns reported in an unsubstantiated allegation continue to occur, the complainant may collect further evidence to provide to the department and lodge an additional complaint.

Will I be notified of the outcome of the investigation?

When the complainant shares their contact information (i.e., email or mailing address) with the department, the department will send a copy of the findings report to the complainant upon the conclusion of the investigation.

The department will never reveal the identity of the complainant unless the complainant consents in writing to the disclosure, or the complainant's information is required in an administrative or judicial proceeding. While the department will never confirm the identity of the complainant except as described above, the nature of the questions asked by the certifying agent during the investigation may provide enough information for the care provider to guess who lodged the complaint. The complainant may choose to remain completely anonymous, but anonymous complainants are not provided with a findings report.