

## A GUIDE TO THE Chief Executive's Advisory Panel

When there is a disagreement about a decision or concern about the actions of Child, Youth and Family, we want to ensure things are resolved fairly and quickly.

The first step is to have your complaint resolved by Child, Youth and Family. If it isn't, you can apply to the Ministry of Social Development to have your complaint reviewed by the Advisory Panel to the Chief Executive. This guide is about what the Advisory Panel does and how its meetings work.

### **If I apply will my complaint be reviewed by the Panel?**

Not all complaints can be reviewed by the Panel. For example there may be legal reasons why the panel can't review your complaint. The Ministry will contact you to explain this.

### **What does the Advisory Panel do?**

The Advisory Panel will review all the information put before it and decide one of the following about your complaint:

- uphold it
- uphold it in part
- not uphold your complaint.

If the Panel upholds your complaint in whole or in part it will recommend to the Chief Executive of the Ministry of Social Development what steps should be taken to resolve it.

The Panel will also identify opportunities for improvement in Child, Youth and Family processes, systems and performance.

### **Who is on the Panel?**

The Advisory Panel is made up of three people who aren't employed by Child, Youth and Family and have had no involvement in your case. They all come from outside the Ministry.

### **What is a Panel meeting?**

A Panel meeting is an informal meeting where the Panel carefully considers your complaint. The Chair of the Panel determines the procedure for the meeting.

### **Can I attend the meeting?**

Yes you can attend the meeting. It is completely optional, but it can be helpful to the Panel if you are present to answer any questions. If you decide not to attend, the Panel will still discuss your complaint using the information you and Child, Youth and Family have supplied.

### **Can I bring someone along?**

Yes. You are welcome to bring a support person with you. If you are bringing someone with you please tell the Panel Secretariat before the meeting.

If English is your second language or you have a hearing impairment, the Panel Secretariat can arrange for an interpreter or other appropriate help to support you.

### **What happens at a Panel meeting?**

If you have asked to speak to the panel you will speak first, and you may be asked questions by the Panel.

After you have spoken a person from Child, Youth and Family may present their report and answer any questions from the Panel. This will not be the person that you have complained about.

### **When is a decision made?**

The Panel does not make its recommendations at the meeting. The Panel will send its recommendations to the Chief Executive who will decide what action (if any) should be taken. The Ministry will contact you with the decision.

### **What if you still disagree?**

If you still disagree with the decision you can complain to the Ombudsman or the Children's Commissioner. If your complaint is about a registered social worker's practice you can complain to the Social Workers Registration Board.

*If you want to know more about the Panel please contact the:*

National Manager  
Review Secretariat  
Ministry of Social Development  
PO Box 1556  
Wellington.