

Complaint Policy and Procedures (Hague Regulation 96.41 a-g)

POLICY: Gladney Center for Adoption (the “Agency” or “Gladney”) permits any birth parent, prospective adoptive parent, adoptive parent, or adoptee (each a “complaining person”) to lodge a grievance, complaint or appeal about any services or activities of the Agency or any of its supervised providers, domestic or foreign, that such person believes are inconsistent with the Hague convention, Intercountry Adoption Act of 2000, the Universal Accreditation Act, State licensing requirements, or the Hague Regulations. (Hague Regulation 96.41(b)).

Gladney will not take any action to discourage a client or prospective client from making a complaint, expressing a grievance, questioning the conduct of, or expressing an opinion about the performance of the Agency or any person acting on behalf of the agency. (Hague Regulation 96.41(e)). The reputation of the Agency is of critical importance and we strive for 100% client satisfaction. It is the policy of the Agency to encourage open communication, and to promptly and proactively try to resolve any issue where a client or other stakeholder is dissatisfied. All decisions by Gladney are always made in the best interests of the child.

Gladney shall provide to prospective adoptive parents the *Complaint Policy and Procedures* with initial information (Hague Regulation 96.41(a)) and on the Agency’s website. Clients of Gladney receive this information in the initial marketing materials, as part of the new client paperwork (see *Rights and Responsibilities of Client and Privacy Practices*) and in the signed *Adoption Contract (International)*.

PROCEDURES: Client agrees to provide Agency (c/o its “Vice President- International Adoption”) with prompt written notice of any complaint regarding the Agency and its services. Any complaint is encouraged to be filed within 30 days of Client first becoming aware of the offending conduct. Any complaint must be emailed to the Vice President- International Adoption at Diana.DeGroot@Gladney.org, Subject Line “Official Complaint”; or mailed to the following address:

Gladney Center for Adoption
Society Office Complex
1102 Society Drive
Claymont, DE 19703
Attention: Vice President- International Adoption

If the complaint involves the Vice President- International Adoption, the complaint can be mailed to the “President and CEO” at the Agency Headquarters.

Gladney Center for Adoption
6300 John Ryan Drive
Fort Worth, TX 76132-4122
Attention: President and CEO

Gladney will investigate and respond to the complaining person in writing within 30 days of receipt of such complaint. Agency will provide expedited review under the following circumstances:

1. If the complaining person requests expedited consideration and demonstrates that matters are time sensitive; or
2. If the complaint involves allegations of fraud

The complaining person will receive a written reply within 4 (four) business days of receipt of an expedited complaint. (Hague Regulation 96.41(c)).

To the extent that the complaining person is dissatisfied with the response to the complaint, the complaining person may appeal and request reconsideration by writing to the President and CEO via postal mail to the Texas headquarters (same address as above). The CEO will discuss with other Directors of the organization and the complaining person will receive a response within 14 days from the date the complaint was received. If the complaint is regarding the Vice President- International Adoption, and the CEO has already reviewed, the complaint will be forwarded to the Board of Directors to review the appeal.

The complaining person may also lodge a complaint with the Hague Complaint Registry in accordance with Hague Regulation 96.70 at the following website: <http://adoptionusca.state.gov/HCRWeb/WelcomeForm.aspx>. Failure of the complaining person to respond shall constitute an acceptance of the response or corrective action taken by Agency. The complaining person and the Agency may, by mutual written agreement, consent to an extension of time.

If the complainant believes that an infringement of laws, regulations, or accreditation standards has occurred, the complainant has the right to file a complaint directly with the state licensing authority, the Department of State, and/or the Accrediting Entity.

Licensing Authorities:

Arkansas- PASSEOmbudsmanOffice@dhs.arkansas.gov.
Delaware- <https://kids.delaware.gov/occl/complaint.shtml>
Florida- Suncoast Region Office of Licensing- 813-857-7254.
Illinois- DCFS- Central Region (217)782-4000
Missouri- <https://dss.mo.gov/cd/info/forms/word/cs131.dotxn>
New Jersey- Office of Licensing (877) 667-9845
New York- (800) 442-8106 or conduct@nysed.gov
North Carolina- (919) 527-6340 or DSSwebRequestsChildwelfare@dhhs.nc.gov
Pennsylvania- <https://www.dhs.pa.gov/Services/Assistance/Pages/Regional-OCYF-Offices.aspx>
Oklahoma- Child Care Services/Child Placing and Residential Agencies (918) 607-9431
Texas- (800) 720-7777

Department of State Hague Complaint Registry:

http://adoption.state.gov/hague_convention/agency_accreditation/complaints.php

Accrediting Entity:

IAAME: <https://www.iaame.net/report-a-concern/>

Gladney will maintain a written record of each complaint, and the steps taken to investigate and respond to the complaint. Complaint summaries will be reviewed at monthly Compliance meetings (Hague Regulation 96.41(d)).

Gladney will provide to its Hague accrediting entity and the Secretary of State on a semi-annual basis, or upon request, the following information: a summary of complaints received, an assessment of any discernible patterns in complaints, and information about the systematic changes that have been made or that are planned to be changed. (Hague Regulation 96.41(f, g)).

Gladney shall utilize the complaint data as part of an overall quality improvement program which includes, but is not limited to, reviewing complaint data, using client satisfaction surveys, and comparing Gladney's practices and performance against the data contained in Secretary of State's annual reports to Congress. (Hague Regulation 96.41(h)).