

Client Grievance Policy

SUBJECT: CLIENT GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE

PURPOSE: To establish a method for client grievances as governed by the Department of Mental Health and Development Disabilities.

SCOPE: This procedure applies to all client grievances presented to The Center.

POLICY:

At the time of intake, each client will be given the **CLIENT GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE** to read and sign that they understand the process. This form will be kept in the client's clinical file under Section 1.

A client grievance shall be recorded on the Grievance Form and may be submitted in writing, verbally, over the phone, or in person. The form shall be readily available in each facility of The Center.

The CEO will appoint a Client Rights Officer (CRO) and the CRO or other staff may assist a client in completing the Grievance Form. It is the responsibility of all staff members to know the client grievance process, inform the client of the correct procedures to file a grievance and the time periods involved.

The grievance form should be submitted to the receptionist, or to a staff member in an off-site location. Upon receipt, the receptionist will request the client to wait in the lobby while the Client Rights Officer (CRO) is contacted. The CRO will either meet with the client immediately or schedule a meeting at a later time with the client. In the event the CRO is absent from the office, an alternate will be appointed by the CEO.

Consumers and family members may have advocates present during all steps of a grievance who may or may not be staff members of The Center.

Initial Grievance – Step 1:

The CRO will meet with the client to explore and clearly define the problem and will explain the entire grievance process. The CRO will investigate the grievance and talk with involved staff, if necessary, and provide a written response to the client within five working days of receiving the grievance. The CRO will request approval of the response from the client. If the client does not agree with the response, they may proceed to Step 2 of the process.

Step 2:

The CRO will investigate the grievance further, with assistance from the appropriate Program Coordinator, and will assess the situation. If the Program Coordinator is directly involved in the grievance, the CEO will appoint another representative.

The CRO will forward the grievance to the CEO, or his/her designee, who will conduct a hearing. The CEO may hear the information him or herself, or may request the assistance of other objective individuals.

The findings and recommendations will be summarized and will be explained to the client within 5 working days from the previous response. If the client does not agree with the response at this step, the client may go to Step 3.

Step 3 (final):

The CEO will forward the grievance to the Board of Directors, who will establish a Hearing Committee and conduct a hearing. The Committee may hear the information, or may request the assistance of other objective individuals. The Committee will propose a resolution within 5 working days.

If the client does not approve a resolution, the grievance shall be reported to the DMHDD Regional Coordinator pursuant to AS 47.30.660(b)(12).

NOTES

All client grievance responses shall be on the Grievance Response Form.

The CRO is an advocate for the client.

A client may have an advocate of any type assist them in any step of the grievance process. A Release of Information must be signed by the client for any advocate to participate on their behalf.

If any time period is not able to be met, the reason for the delay must be documented in writing.

Grievances involving abuse or neglect of any description, or unnecessary seclusion or restraint, will be investigated and reported immediately to the governing body and DMHDD.

All clients shall be given the right to file a grievance, for any reason without intimidation to prevent the filing of a grievance or retaliation if they do. If an employee intimidates or retaliates against a client related to a grievance, disciplinary action will be taken against the employee. Refer to personnel policies for levels of, and procedures for, disciplinary action.

Grievances that are unresolved to the consumer's satisfaction within 30 days shall be reported to the DMHDD Regional Coordinator pursuant to AS 47.30.660(b)(12).



GRIEVANCE FORM

Name: _____ File #: _____

Date Grievance Filed: _____ Date of Occurrence: _____

Grievance Made Against: _____

Description of Grievance:

Expectations For Resolution:

Signature of Complainant DATE

Client Rights Officer DATE