

DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES ADMINISTRATION
Olympia, Washington

TITLE: CLIENT GRIEVANCES 17.02.09

AUTHORITY 483.420(a)(3) *Exercise Rights as Clients and Citizens*
483.10(J) F585 *Grievances*

REFERENCE DDA Policy 5.03 *Client Complaints*

DEFINITIONS

Complainant means an RHC client, the client's parent or guardian, or any other person acting on behalf of the client to submit a concern, complaint, or grievance.

Grievance Official means an RHC employee who oversees the grievance process.

Human Rights Committee means a group of people who proactively protect client rights by monitoring facility practices and programs.

PURPOSE

To establish a process for a Residential Habilitation Center (RHC) to address concerns, complaints, and grievances received about a client's care and services.

SCOPE

This policy applies to all RHC employees who serve as a member of a client's Interdisciplinary Team, the RHC Grievance Officer, and the RHC Superintendent.

POLICY

- A. The RHC accepts complaints, concerns, and grievances from:
1. The client;
 2. The client's parent or guardian; and
 3. Any other person acting on behalf of the client.

- B. The RHC accepts complaints about the client's care, services, and anticipated changes to the client's care or services.
- C. The RHC must try to resolve a complaint through an informal process before initiating the formal grievance process.

PROCEDURE

- A. Informal grievance process
 - 1. If the RHC receives a complaint about a client's care or services, the Interdisciplinary Team must:
 - a. Record the complainant's concerns;
 - b. Address and attempt to resolve the concern; and
 - c. Document in the client's record, any steps taken to resolve the concern.
 - 2. If the Interdisciplinary Team and complainant do not resolve the concern, the complainant may contact the Grievance Official and initiate the formal grievance process.
- B. Formal grievance process

The Grievance Official must:

 - 1. Record the complainant's concern;
 - 2. Acknowledge receipt of the complaint in writing within three business days;
 - 3. Investigate the concern;
 - 4. Within five business days discuss the outcome of the investigation and provide a written report to the complainant; and
 - 5. Send a copy of the investigation to the Superintendent within five business days.
- C. Complainant's appeal rights
 - 1. Following the Grievance Official's response, if still not satisfied, the complainant may request a review by the Human Rights Committee.
 - 2. The Human Rights Committee will respond in writing to the complainant and Superintendent within five business days.

3. No more than three business days after the Superintendent receives a response from the Human Rights Committee, the Superintendent must:
 - a. Send a written response to the Grievance Official; and
 - b. Meet with the complainant.
- D. The Superintendent is not bound by any recommendations made by the Human Rights Committee.
- E. The Superintendent's decision is final.
- F. The complainant may waive timeline requirements contained in this policy. To waive timeline requirements, the complainant must submit a signed, written statement to the Grievance Official.

GRIEVANCE OFFICIAL RESPONSIBILITIES

The Grievance Official must:

- A. Receive and track grievances;
- B. Lead the facility's grievance investigations;
- C. Maintain confidential information associated with grievances, such as the identity of the client for those grievances submitted anonymously;
- D. Issue written grievance decisions to the client; and
- E. Coordinate with state and federal agencies as necessary.

SUPERSESION

RHC Standard Operating Procedure 102.1, *Client Grievances*
Issued May 15, 2018

Approved: _____


Deputy Assistant Secretary
Developmental Disabilities Administration

Date: May 15, 2018¹

¹ This document was a standard operating procedure that was reissued as a DDA policy without substantive changes.