

Sample Grievance Policy for Parent/Guardians and Consumers

This organization believes consumers, and parents/guardians have valuable thoughts and insights to share regarding our operations. Accordingly, this organization encourages consumers and parents/guardians to share opinions, suggestions, concerns, questions and/or grievances about our policies, personnel, and/or other matters impacting the organization.

In general, the best person initially to bring opinions, suggestions, concerns, and/or questions to is the *[insert person at the organization who will receive these concerns]*. However, to the extent the concerns relate to *[insert person at the organization who will receive these concerns]*, or to the extent a consumer or parent/guardian believes *[insert person at the organization who will receive these concerns]* did not fully address a matter, consumers and parents/guardians may direct their opinions, suggestions, concerns, and/or questions to the next level of management or directly to *[insert leader or top person to hear/resolve grievances]*.

To remedy concerns that appear to have been ignored or unresolved after initial reporting, utilize this formal grievance procedure. This procedure provides for a timely, thorough and objective investigation of the following concerns:

- Inappropriate Behavior by Employees/Volunteers
- Inappropriate Behavior by Consumers
- Retaliation
- Whistleblower complaints

Written Complaint Required for Formal Process

Verbal complaints are encouraged, particularly for issues that may be easily and expeditiously resolved, but a written complaint is required to initiate this grievance process.

To ensure a timely and effective response, complaints should include the following information to the extent possible:

1. The name(s) of individual(s) involved
2. The date(s) the behavior occurred
3. The name(s) of any known witness(es)
4. A summary of the conduct meriting the grievance including:
 - a. The behavior complained of and/or the alleged policy or legal violation(s)
 - b. Direct quotes when relevant and available
 - c. Any relevant documentation
5. The remedy sought by the employee making the complaint

[Sample Form containing spaces for all of the above provided at the end of this sample policy]

Timeline

Consumers or parents/guardians who themselves have a complaint or who are aware of behavior meriting a complaint, must provide the above described written complaint via email to their *[insert person at the organization who will receive these concerns]* within *[insert timeframe]*. Consider 5-10 business days as the purpose of this policy is to timely and objectively resolve complaints. Consumers and parents/guardians do need some time to decide whether filing a grievance is warranted, but an indefinite amount of time limits the opportunity to resolve complaints and move forward]. The *[insert person at the organization who will receive these concerns]* will meet with the consumer or parent/guardian to hear their concern and attempt to resolve the complaint within *[insert timeframe. Consider 1-5 business days]*.

Following that meeting, the *[insert person at the organization who will receive these concerns]* or *[insert person designated to investigate]* will provide a brief written response to the consumer or parent/guardian who brought the complaint no later than *[insert timeframe. Consider 5-10 business days as that is what many organizations use. It is best to resolve these expeditiously but you want to build in time for investigation]* that includes brief written findings on the issues raised and relief sought.

If the consumer or parent/guardian is not satisfied with the written response, the individual who brought the complaint may submit an appeal to *[insert leader of organization or group such as the Board who will hear and decide on the final appeal]* no later than *[insert timeframe. Consider 10-15 business days as that is what many organizations use. It is best to resolve these expeditiously but you want to build in time for investigation]*. The *[insert leader of organization or group such as the Board who will hear and decide on the final appeal]*, will meet with the consumer or parent/guardian to hear their concern and attempt to resolve the complaint within *[insert timeframe. Consider 10-15 business days, though may need to build in extra time if the Board is the appellate body]*.

Following that meeting, the *[insert leader of organization or group such as the Board who will hear and decide on the final appeal]* will provide a written response to the consumer or parent/guardian who brought the complaint no later than *[insert timeframe. Consider 10-15 business days]* that includes brief written findings on the issues raised and relief sought.

The *[insert leader of organization or group such as the Board who will hear and decide on the final appeal]* is the final arbiter of grievance matters at this organization.

Investigation

The *[insert person at the organization who will receive these concerns]*, *[insert person designated to investigate]* and/or *[insert leader of organization or group such as the Board who will hear and decide on the final appeal]* will thoroughly investigate the issues raised in the grievance and will protect the privacy and confidentiality of all parties involved to the extent possible by law. All parties must cooperate with the investigation.

If the organization determines a violation of policy or law has occurred, the organization will take appropriate action, up to and including termination and notification of external authorities.

Retaliation

This organization strictly prohibits retaliation against consumers and/or parents/guardians for reporting, filing, testifying, assisting or participating in any manner in any investigation, proceeding or hearing conducted by the organization or a federal or state law enforcement agency or court. Consumers and/or parents/guardians should report any suspected retaliation to their *[insert person at the organization who will receive these concerns]*, *[insert person designated to investigate]* and/or *[insert leader of organization or group such as the Board who will hear and decide on the final appeal]* immediately after becoming aware of it. Any report of retaliatory conduct will be objectively, timely and thoroughly investigated. If a report of retaliation is found to be valid, the organization will take appropriate remedial action, up to and including discharging the individual(s) responsible. This organization will not retaliate against any consumer or parent/guardian for raising a complaint and will not knowingly permit retaliation by management or other employees.

Publication and Communication to Consumers and Parents/Guardians

This Grievance Policy must be shared with all consumers and parents/guardians annually and must be included in any organization handbook or manual. Any changes to this policy will be communicated in writing to consumers and parents/guardians via email on file.

Sample Grievance Form for Parent/Guardians and Consumers

Individual Filing Complaint: _____

Role (i.e. Consumer or Parent/Guardian): _____

Date of occurrence: _____ Time of occurrence: _____

Other Individuals Involved/Witnesses to Complaint: _____

Type of Complaint (select all that apply):

_____ Inappropriate Behavior by Employees/Volunteers

_____ Inappropriate Behavior by Consumers

_____ Retaliation

_____ Whistleblower complaints

Describe the situation: What happened, where it happened, when it happened, who was involved, who was present, who was notified? If suspected abuse was it reported to the State? _____

Has this situation ever occurred previously? _____

Describe the remedy you seek. Please list all remedies sought as a result of bringing this grievance. What would you like to see happen to solve this issue? _____

Submitted by: _____ Telephone number: _____

Location or organization: _____

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Reviewed by: _____ Date: _____

Email completed form to *[Insert email address Here]*