

Policy Name	Consumer Grievance and Appeal Policy
Policy Owner	Director of Information Management and Compliance
Corresponding Procedure	Consumer Grievance and Appeal Procedures
Last Updated	4/23/2021
Last Reviewed	6/24/2024



CONSUMER GRIEVANCE AND APPEAL POLICY

OBJECTIVE/PURPOSE:

The overall goal of the grievance and appeal process is to resolve disputes fairly, to enhance member and public confidence in the equity and integrity of the service system, to ensure members access to medically necessary, covered benefits, and to allow for the independent review of Medicaid Program staff decisions concerning appealable actions. Members initiating or pursuing a grievance or appeal will be free from discrimination and retaliation.

POLICY:

A grievance or appeal will be appropriately reviewed and given due consideration in a timely manner. Clients, and/or guardians, if applicable, will be informed of the agency's grievance and appeal policy and procedures upon intake and annually thereafter, or at a different frequency if specific contracts allow. The policy and procedures will also be posted in service locations and on the agency's website. Additionally, all staff will be trained on the consumer grievance and appeal policy and procedures upon hire and annually thereafter. Any individuals initiating or pursuing a grievance or appeal will be free from any form of discrimination and retaliation. Any questions about this policy or the associated procedures should be directed to Howard Center's Director of Information Management and Compliance. The Compliance Officer will serve as the primary grievance and appeals coordinator for Howard Center with the Administrative Coordinator for Information Management and Compliance serving as the grievance and appeals coordinator across programs. This coordinator is responsible for ensuring timely processing and resolution of all grievances and appeals. All discussions surrounding the decision process of a grievance or appeal will be kept confidential from the general public or third parties, unless requested otherwise by the client.

Clients of the Park Street Program and the Transitional House Program have additional grievance rights documented in the agency policy on the Prison Rape Elimination Act (PREA). Please see that policy for further detail.

Timelines and department-specific requirements may vary depending on which program the grievance or appeal occurs in. The grievance and appeal coordinator will be responsible for reviewing and complying with different departmental requirements, when not outlined in this policy.

At any time, a staff person or client can contact the Compliance Hotline by calling 802-488-7195 to leave a confidential voicemail. These calls can be made anonymously. All calls will be investigated and responded to.