

Resolution Process for Consumers and Interested Parties

Developmental Disabilities Resource Center (DDRC) shall have a Resolution Process that provides for a formal channel of communication when a consumer, family, guardian, or interested party has an unresolved concern, disagreement, or complaint involving services. The party may bring a problem to the attention of the Resource Coordinator and/or program staff. The Customer Relations Manager may be called in to mediate or assist with resolution during any stage of the process. Efforts will be made to resolve a concern at its earliest stage and in a fair manner. No individual shall be coerced, intimidated, threatened, or retaliated against because that individual has exercised his or her right to file a complaint or has participated in the resolution process.

When a concern, disagreement or appeal involves eligibility determination, termination from service or significant change on an Individual Plan, the Dispute Resolution Procedure #3600 will be used.

The Resolution Process is intended to provide a formal channel of communication for a consumer, family, guardian, or other interested party to discuss with DDRC management their unresolved concerns, disagreements or complaints. Complaints may be defined as, but are not limited to, a violation of rights; a time when the health, safety, or welfare of the person receiving services is potentially at risk; repeating issues or concerns. DDRC will take every opportunity to inform consumers of the availability of the services of the Customer Relations Manager. Opportunities shall be provided for individuals to come together in order to attempt finding a mutually acceptable solution. There is an expectation that all parties will try to resolve problems at the earliest stage. If the consumer, family, guardian, or interested parties voluntarily agree, the Customer Relations Manager may be called to assist in mediation of the complaint.

When issues or concerns develop, note the following:

- All parties will try to resolve the issue at the earliest stage.
- Discussion should be targeted to specific concern(s).
- A resolution should be reached sooner than the 10-day deadline in each step. Prompt response and resolution are encouraged.
- Decisions must be made within the context of DDRC Board policies and procedures.
- Interpretation in native language other than English and through such mode of communication as is necessary shall be made available upon request.
- The health, safety and welfare of consumers are of primary importance.
- The Customer Relations Manager may be called to mediate or assist with resolution during any stage of the process.

Step 1

The consumer, family, guardian, or interested party shall notify the assigned Resource Coordinator and/or Program Manager of the desire to use the Resolution Process. The consumer, family, guardian, or interested party shall address the concern with the Resource Coordinator and/or Program Manager. If the Program Manager is notified, the Program Manager will notify the Resource Coordinator. The Resource Coordinator will convene program staff and others involved as necessary to resolve issues. A plan of action will be developed with reasonable deadlines. When resolution is reached, documentation through staff minutes or contact notes will be completed. The Customer Relations Manager may be called to mediate or assist with resolution during any stage of the process. If resolution is not obtained, proceed to the next step.

Step 2

The consumer, family, guardian, or interested party will contact the Department Director or designee to request a meeting. The Department Director or designee should meet with the consumer, family, guardian, or interested party as soon as possible, but no later than 10 working days unless all parties agree to an extended time frame or circumstances occur that cannot be controlled. The Department Director or designee will file a Resolution form with the Customer Relations Manager. The Department Director or designee will note the concerns and issues of the person filing the complaint and the desired resolution. The consumer, family, guardian, or interested party will be notified either by phone or letter of the follow-up to the filed complaint. The complaint will be closed when the parties involved are satisfied with the outcome. The Customer Relations Manager may be called to mediate or assist with resolution during any stage of the process. If resolution is not obtained, proceed to the next step.

Step 3

The Customer Relations Manager will become involved. If not already completed, a Resolution form will be completed. The Customer Relations Manager will gather information to reach a satisfactory resolution. The individual will receive a response no later than 10 working days after filing a complaint with the Customer Relations Manager unless all parties agree to an extended time frame or circumstances occur which cannot be controlled. If approval of the decision must be obtained from DDRC senior management, the Customer Relations Manager will get the necessary approval. The consumer, family, guardian, or interested party will be notified either by phone or letter of the follow-up to the filed complaint. The complaint will be closed when the parties involved are satisfied with the outcome. If resolution is not obtained, proceed to the next step.

Step 4

If not resolved at step 3, the complaint will be heard by the Executive Director or designee. The consumer, family, guardian, or interested party will receive a decision in writing within 10 working days of filing the complaint with the Executive Director or designee.

Step 5

If the consumer, family, guardian, or interested party is not in agreement with the decision of the Executive Director or designee, an appeal may be filed with the DDRRC Board of Directors, in writing, within 10 working days. The Board may choose to conduct an independent hearing to review the decision made by the Executive Director or designee. The Board shall issue a written decision to the consumer, family, guardian, or interested party within 30 working days following their review.

Customer Satisfaction surveys will be completed on each complaint after resolution. The surveys will be shared with necessary staff.