



Formal Complaint Procedure for Persons Served

The organization's policy shall be to maintain an internal process through which formal complaints and appeals to decisions are addressed with respect to organizational policies and individual rights and responsibilities. In no way shall retaliation result toward a consumer lodging formal complaint nor will barriers to services for which the consumer is eligible be tolerated.

A. Definitions:

1. **Complaint:** An expressed dissatisfaction with or resentment about an action or decision.
2. **Formal Complaint:** A circumstance regarded as just cause for formal protest, usually as a result of perceived infringement of individual rights, coupled with the expectation of review and resolution. This is presented in written form.
3. **Appeal:** A request for the review of a particular decision with an interest in seeing the decision reversed or amended in favor of the person making the appeal.

B. Procedures for Resolving Formal Complaints and Appeals Process:

The following procedures and process will be explained to the consumer served in an understandable manner, using language familiar to the consumer. If required or requested, the consumer may have a personally selected advocate or representative present to facilitate communication and provide support.

1. Discuss your complaint with your advisor. Your advisor will meet with you. If you wish you may invite any one person to join you. If you are a minor or have a guardian, we would like you to invite your parents or guardian. Your complaint will receive courteous and prompt attention. In most situations, complaints can be resolved immediately as a result of clear communication and, in some cases, compromise. Short of immediate resolution, you will receive a reply to your concerns within two days of your request.
2. In the event your complaint is about your advisor and discussing the matter will not resolve the matter to your satisfaction or, if you have received your advisor's reply to your complaint and wish to appeal this decision, you may present your complaint to the president. Your complaint must be presented to the president in writing.

The president will investigate the complaint, attempt to resolve it and provide a decision in writing to you within five days of receiving the written complaint. You will receive the president's written response and a copy will be placed in your case record.

3. If you wish to appeal the decision of the president, you may take your written complaint and the president's written response to the corporate compliance officer. The corporate compliance officer will visit with you, your advisor and any other members of staff as appropriate; investigate the issues; and present her findings to the board for a decision.
- 4). The board of directors will review to factors of your complaint and previous decisions. The written decision of the board shall given to you by the corporate compliance officer within ten (10) days. The decision from the board of directors is considered final.
- 5) If you are is still dissatisfied with the final decision, contact information for Missouri Protection and Advocacy will be provided.