

CLIENT GRIEVANCE POLICY/PROCEDURE

Lutheran Social Services recognizes its responsibility to listen to client, applicant, and other stakeholder suggestions, complaints or grievances, and attempt to resolve any such concerns. A grievance/complaint is defined as an expression of verbal or written dissatisfaction that can include, but is not limited to, services, manner of treatment, outcomes or experiences.

Clients (or a client's parent or legal guardian), applicants, and other stakeholders have the right to file a grievance. Individuals filing grievances are treated with dignity, understanding, and respect. In no case will a grievance result in any reprisal. Clients will not be denied service because of a grievance.

Grievances will be given prompt and careful attention and, when indicated, grievances will result in corrective action. LSS staff are charged with the responsibility of providing assistance and services within the full intent of LSS policies, and with making efforts to resolve conflicts.

Clients are informed of their rights when services are initiated by receiving a copy of the LSS Client Rights and Responsibilities statement. A copy of the grievance policy will be given to clients at their request or at such time that a complaint is made to an LSS staff member that cannot be resolved.

The following is the procedure by which clients and representatives of LSS shall attempt to discuss and resolve grievances:

1. Individuals are to discuss grievances that they may have with the staff with whom they are in contact. If a grievance cannot be resolved by the employee, the employee shall inform the individual of the grievance procedure and inform their supervisor and director of the unresolved grievance.
2. If the complainant(s) wishes to pursue the grievance procedure, they must inform the staff member or staff member's supervisor of that intent in writing along with a description of the complaint. Such intent will be communicated by the appropriate personnel to the director.
3. Within ten working days, the complainant, staff member, and director will discuss the grievance and attempt resolution.
4. In the event the grievance is not satisfactorily resolved at this point, the complainant may elect to submit the grievance to the appropriate vice-president. The vice-president reviews the case and responds within ten working days.
5. If the complainant remains unsatisfied with the resolution, they may appeal the matter to the president of Lutheran Social Services. When an appeal is made to the president, the vice-president compiles a complete report of the situation, including; action taken, reason, and other documentation gathered. The President shall review an appeal within ten working days of its receipt. The complainant will be notified of the President's decision in writing. The decision shall be final.

All written grievances, LSS' response to them, and a summary of the action taken on each complaint, will be kept and results reported through the agency's Performance & Quality Improvement system.