

PARTNERS IN CARE

Oahu's Continuum of Care

Our mission is to eliminate homelessness through open and inclusive participation and the coordination of integrated responses.

Partners in Care Coordinated Entry System (CES) Complaint and Grievance Policy July 2019

Partners in Care, the Honolulu Continuum of Care, recognizes that consumers, participating provider agencies, or other appropriate stakeholders or parties may express dissatisfaction with Coordinated Entry System. With that in mind, this document stipulates that a grievance is any formally expressed dissatisfaction, legal violation, or instance of gross misconduct or negligence within the Coordinated Entry System as well as any potential violation of the written Coordinated Entry Policies and Procedures. A general complaint differs from a grievance in that a general complaint does not claim a violation of the Policies and Procedures nor does it reflect gross misconduct or describe a legal violation.

In terms of reporting or otherwise articulating either a complaint or a grievance, it must be received in writing. It may be anonymous and can be written either by the consumer or by someone on the consumer's behalf or by a participating agency. Grievances and general complaints will be handled as outlined below.

1. Complaints

General complaints, i.e., not related to discrimination, gross misconduct or negligence, a legal violation, or claiming to violate the Policies and Procedures should be addressed initially by the provider, on behalf of itself as a provider or on behalf of a consumer and should follow the provider's complaints procedure. Complaints that should be addressed directly by the provider staff member or provider staff supervisor may cover but not necessarily be limited to such areas as: provider conditions, how the consumer was treated by provider staff, and violations of confidentiality agreements.

Ideally, the person and provider will try to work out the problem directly as a first step in the process. If this does not resolve the issue, the complaint can be forwarded to the Partners in Care Executive Director who will work with the appropriate CES Administration personnel. CES Administration will then work with the complainant to address the issue and improve the system's overall operations. Complaints may be further appealed to the Partners in Care's CES Oversight Committee. If the grievance is directed at CES and/or its staff, the grievance shall be reviewed by the Partners in Care CES Oversight Committee. The CES Oversight Committee's decision, upon review and acceptance by the Partners In Care Board of Directors, will constitute the final disposition. If the CES Oversight Committee's decision is not accepted by the Partners in Care Board of Directors, then the Board itself will make the final decision.

2. Consumer Grievances

Each participating provider agency must make a good faith effort to resolve a discrimination or Coordinated Entry-related consumer grievance as best they can in the moment. If the consumer feels the grievance was not adequately addressed, the consumer may file a formal grievance with the PIC Executive Director who will work with the appropriate CES Administration personnel. If a consumer is dissatisfied with the resolution, or in the event of a conflict of interest between CES staff and the claimant, the grievance will be reviewed by the Partners in Care CES Oversight Committee.

If the grievance is directed at CES and/or its staff, the Partners in Care Executive Director shall automatically forward it for review by the CES Oversight Committee. The CES Oversight Committee's decision, upon review and acceptance by the Partners In Care Board of Directors, will constitute the final disposition. If the CES Oversight Committee's decision is not accepted by the Board of Directors, then the Board itself will make the final decision.

The person filing the grievance has the right to be assisted by an advocate of her/his choice (e.g., agency staff person, co-worker, friend, family member, etc.) at each step of the grievance process. The filer has the right to withdraw her/his grievance at any time. Any grievance paperwork filed by a participant should note her/his name and contact information so they can be contacted by the appropriate party to discuss issues raised.

3. Provider Grievances

Any participating provider agency filing a grievance concerning a violation or suspected violation of the policies and procedures must be acting in good faith and have reasonable grounds for believing there is a violation of the Coordinated Entry System Policies and Procedures.

Grievances will be processed in such a way in which grievances are addressed in the most objective and fair way. This includes a process by which the agency involved in the grievance does not participate in the review.

If the grievance is directed at CES and/or its staff, the Partners in Care Executive Director shall automatically forward it for review by the CES Oversight Committee. The CES Oversight Committee's decision, upon review and acceptance by the Partners In Care Board of Directors, will constitute the final disposition. If the CES Oversight Committee's decision is not accepted by the Board of Directors, then the Board itself will make the final decision.

To file a grievance, the participating provider agency will contact the Partners in Care Executive Director with a written statement describing the alleged violation of the Coordinated Entry System Policies and Procedures or related concerns. The statement shall also detail steps taken to resolve the issue locally. The PIC Executive Director will work with the appropriate CES Administration personnel. Once the PIC Executive Director and CES Administration has received all

documentation, they will decide if the grievance is valid and determine if further action needs to be taken.

If a provider agency is dissatisfied with the resolution, or in the event of a conflict of interest between CES Administration and the claimant, the grievance will be reviewed by the CES Oversight Committee. The CES Oversight Committee's decision, upon review and acceptance by the Partners in Care Board of Directors, will constitute the final disposition. If the CES Oversight Committee's decision is not accepted by the Board of Directors, then the Board itself will make the final decision.

All complaints and grievances can mailed to the administrative office of Partners In Care:

Laura E. Thielen, Executive Director
Partners In Care, O'ahu's Continuum of Care
200 North Vineyard Boulevard, Suite 210
Honolulu, HI 96817
808-543-2282
lthielen@auw.org

The following applies to complaints, consumer grievances and provider grievances:

- a. Partners In Care Executive Director, supported by counsel of the Coordinated Entry System Lead Administrator, will review the grievance, research the nature of the complaint, and will respond to the grievant within 30 days. If the Partners In Care, Executive Director role is vacant, then the Board Vice chair will lead the process.
- b. Upon such request, clients may receive a written notification containing a clear statement of client status on the community queue "By Name List" within the Coordinated Entry System, reasons for termination or denial of assistance, the specific date for which assistance will cease, the right of the participant to have a review of the decision, instructions on how the Participant is to invoke this review, the right of the Participant to review the records and the right to counsel at the sole expense of Participant during this review;
- c. The agency named in the grievance, the CoC, and other participating HMIS agencies will not refuse or reduce services to the client because of a filed grievance. A thorough investigation by CoC will ensue if a client reports retaliation due to the filed grievance.