

DEPARTMENT: Program Management

SUBJECT: Complaint and Appeal Policy

POLICY: If a participant or guardian is dissatisfied with the quality of care or decisions made regarding Creative Work Systems (CWS) services, CWS will provide the individual with the opportunity to file a complaint or appeal the decision. The Team Leader is responsible for providing timely support to the individual throughout this process. However, at the request of the individual, another staff person may provide this support. In addition, participants are informed that they may have a friend, guardian, family member or advocate accompany them through the process. *Participants will not experience any direct or indirect repercussions such as retaliation, humiliation or barriers to services as a result of filing a complaint or appeal.*

If an individual feels, at any point in the process, that they would like an external review, they may contact their Case Manager, The Maine Developmental Disabilities Council, The Maine Long Term Ombudsman Program, Disability Rights Center or any external advocacy agency of their choice. CWS staff will be available to assist the individual with accessing external advocates as needed.

Formal Complaints

Filing a Complaint provides a process through which participant concerns may be heard by formally expressing disagreements with the team or dissatisfaction with CWS services.

Appeals

Filing an Appeal provides a process through which participants may challenge termination, non-acceptance or any other program decision made with which they disagree. CWS may refuse service to any participant who presents a clear threat to the safety or welfare of themselves or others. In this instance, the procedure may be modified to preserve the safety and welfare of all involved.

COMPLAINT AND APPEAL PROCEDURE:

LEVEL I

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| Participant/Guardian | 1. | Notifies the Team Leader they have a complaint or appeal. |
| Team Leader | 2. | Provides Complaint and Appeal form to the individual for completion. The form is readily available on the CWS website and at all CWS main office locations. |
| Participant/Guardian | 3. | Completes Complaint and Appeal form. Returns to Team Leader. |
| Team Leader | 4. | Within two working days coordinates a meeting with the Program/Residential Manager, Participant or Guardian if applicable and any others identified by the individual for resolution of the complaint or appeal. |
| Team Leader | 5. | Sends written results of initial meeting to the Program Director, Program/Residential Manager, CWS Human Rights Committee, Participant or Guardian if applicable and any others identified by the individual. |

LEVEL II

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| Participant/Guardian | 1. | If unsatisfied with results of the initial meeting to resolve the complaint or appeal, the individual may request a second meeting. |
| Team Leader | 2. | Within two working days coordinates a meeting with the Program Director, Program/Residential Manager, Participant or Guardian if applicable and any others identified by the individual. |
| Team Leader | 3. | Sends written results of second meeting to the Program Director, Program/Residential Manager, CWS Human Rights Committee Participant or Guardian if applicable and any others identified by the individual. |

LEVEL III

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| Participant/Guardian | 1. | If unsatisfied with the results of the second meeting, notifies the Team Leader of a request for a third meeting. |
| Team Leader | 2. | Within two days of request, arranges meeting to include all previously involved and a representative from the CWS Human Rights Committee. |
| Program Director | 3. | May request subsequent meetings or other investigatory actions. |
| Program Director | 4. | Renders decision regarding complaint or appeal and conveys the written decision to the Executive Director, Chief Operating Officer, CWS Human Rights Committee, Program/Residential Manager, Participant or Guardian if applicable and any others identified by the individual. |
| Human Rights Committee | 5. | May request further investigation or make recommendations to issues related to complaint or appeals. Conducts annual written analysis of all formal complaints and appeals to determine trends, areas needing performance improvement and actions taken. |