

Client Rights, Complaints and Grievances

Reviewed: 7/22/26

Programs Involved:
Community Housing
Shelter

Policy:

It is the policy of the YMCA Community Housing & Shelter Programs to provide services that respect the rights of persons served and to follow a process to receive and resolve client complaints and grievances. This process provides clients with a means to report complaints and grievances. The policy applies to all YMCA Community Housing & Shelter staff, volunteers and all partner agencies affiliated with YMCA of Central Ohio.

Process:

- A complaint would be any concern related to: (A) The building or space, including how it is arranged and the special features that protect clients, visitors, and staff; (B) Equipment used to support Client care or to safely operate the building or space; (C) People, including those who work within the YMCA Community Housing & Shelter Programs, clients, and anyone else who enters the facility, environment of care; and/or (D) access to or delivery of services.
- A grievance would be any concern that would be a violation of the YMCA's Client Rights
- A client can include a person served through The YMCA's Community Housing or Shelter Programs.
- Case Management includes services accredited in accordance with the Commission on Accreditation of Rehabilitation Facilities (CARF) under the Behavioral Health Standards Manual and meeting the service requirements of Community Psychiatric Support Treatment under 5122-25 of the Ohio Revised Code.
- Mental Health Services includes case management/service coordination, also known as community psychiatric support treatment, assessment, individual and group behavioral health counseling as defined by 5122-25 of the Ohio Revised Code.
- All clients have a right to file a complaint or grievance if they feel their rights have been violated. Clients are entitled to due process when filing a grievance or complaint, if they feel as though they have not received fair treatment by YMCA Community Housing & Shelter Program Staff or if there has been some perceived mistreatment during their program participation or shelter stay. No client shall be harassed or be subjected to punitive action by the YMCA Community Housing & Shelter Program Staff as a consequence of exercising his/her right to file a grievance or complaint.
- All clients will be provided a copy of the Client Rights, Complaint, Grievance and Appeals Policy at program entry and explanation of the rights shall be in a manner appropriate for the client's understanding.
- All clients sign and date documentation acknowledging the receipt of the YMCA's Client Rights, Complaint, Grievance and Appeal Policy.
- All clients who have a complaint or grievance are encouraged to complete a Client Complaint/Grievance Form.
 - Shelter/Housing: Forms and drop boxes are available in each program's main lobby and/or other areas easily accessible to clients.
 - Rapid ReHousing/Scattered sites: Forms are available via email or from Case Managers.
- When a client indicates they wish to file a complaint/grievance, YMCA Community Housing & Shelter staff must provide the client access to the complaint form and instruct the client how to complete and submit the grievance/complaint.
- A grievance/complaint must be put in writing. It must be dated and signed by the client.

- The written grievance/complaint must include, if available: the date, approximate time, description of the incident and names of individuals involved in the incident or situation being grieved.
 - YMCA Community Housing & Shelter staff will provide reasonable assistance to the client if they cannot complete the complaint form on their own. The client should be reminded that the Client Rights Officer is also available to assist them.
- YMCA Community Housing & Shelter staff and/or Manager On Duty will ensure that all grievances/complaints are placed in the appropriate designated area.
- YMCA Community Housing & Shelter designated staff will ensure that the grievance/complaint is forwarded to the appropriate staff member for review as soon as possible, but no later than within two business days.
- YMCA Community Housing & Shelter staff responsible for reviewing the grievance/complaint will initiate a review of the complaint within five (5) business days of receiving the grievance/complaint. This review should be completed within ten (10) business days of the receipt of the grievance/complaint. Any extenuating circumstances indicating that this time period will need to be extended must be documented in the written notification given to clients.
- YMCA Community Housing & Shelter staff members responsible for reviewing and responding to grievances/complaints will update appropriate tracking logs within ten (10) business days of initiating review.
- Grievance/Complaint investigations may include, but not limited to: a review of documentation and discussions as necessary with involved staff persons and clients. The investigation may involve additional communication via telephone or email with the client where appropriate and feasible.
- YMCA Community Housing & Shelter Program Staff shall maintain for at least two (2) years from resolution records of client grievance/complaint that include at a minimum the following:
 - Copy of the grievance
 - Documentation of review process
 - Documentation of resolution/remedy of the grievance
- A written analysis of all formal grievances/complaints will be conducted annually to determine trends, areas needing performance and actions taken.
- YMCA Community Housing & Shelter programs shall designate a Client Rights Officer.
 - Client Rights Officers for Community Housing and Shelter Programs:
 - cro@ymcacolumbus.org
 - 220-465-5330
 - If the client is filing a complaint against the client rights officer, the complaint should be filed by calling:
 - 614-389-4409

Client Rights pursuant to Section 5122-26-18 of the Ohio Revised Code:

- The right to be treated with consideration and respect for personal dignity, autonomy and privacy;
- The right to reasonable protection from physical, sexual or emotional abuse and inhumane treatment;
- The right to receive services in the least restrictive, feasible environment;
- The right to participate in any appropriate and available service that is consistent with an individual service plan (ISP), regardless of the refusal of other service, unless that service is a necessity for clear treatment reasons and requires the person's participation;
- The right to give informed consent to or to refuse any service, treatment or therapy, including medication absent an emergency; Grievance
- The right to participate in the development, review and revision of one's own individualized treatment plan and receive a copy of it;
- The right to freedom from unnecessary or excessive medication, and to be free from restraint or seclusion unless there is immediate risk of physical harm to self or others.

- The right to be informed and the right to refuse any unusual or hazardous treatment procedures;
 - The right to be advised and the right to refuse observation by others and by techniques such as one-way vision mirrors, tape recorders, video recorders, television, movies, photographs or other audio and visual technology. This right does not prohibit an agency from using closed-circuit monitoring to observe seclusion rooms or common areas, which does not include bathrooms or sleeping areas;
 - The right to confidentiality of communications and personal identifying information within the limitations and requirements for disclosure of client information under state and federal laws and regulations.
 - The right to have access to one's own client record unless access to certain information is restricted for clear treatment reasons. If access is restricted, the treatment plan shall include the reason for the restriction, a goal to remove the restriction and the treatment being offered to remove the restriction.
 - The right to be informed a reasonable amount of time in advance of the reason for terminating participation in a service, and to be provided a referral, unless the service is unavailable or not necessary;
 - The right to be informed of the reason for denial of a service;
 - The right not to be discriminated against for receiving services on the basis of race, ethnicity, age, color, religion, gender, national origin, physical or mental handicap, developmental disability, genetic information, human immunodeficiency virus status, or in any manner prohibited by local, state or federal laws.
 - The right to know the cost of services;
 - The right to be verbally informed of all client rights, and to receive a written copy upon request;
 - The right to exercise one's own rights without reprisal, except that no right extends so far as to supersede health and safety considerations;
 - The right to file a grievance;
 - The right to have oral and written instructions concerning the procedure for filing a grievance and to assistance in filing a grievance if requested;
 - The right to be informed of one's own condition; and
 - The right to consult with an independent treatment specialist or legal counsel at one's own expense.
 - The right to voluntarily participate in services.
 - The right to choose own housing and reject substandard housing.
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- Additional client rights (CARF Standards):
 - Freedom from financial or other exploitation, retaliation, humiliation and/or neglect;
 - Informed consent or refusal of expression of choice regarding:
 - Service delivery
 - Release of information
 - Concurrent services
 - Composition of the service delivery team
 - Involvement in research projects, if applicable
 - Access to or referral to:
 - Legal entities for appropriate representation.
 - Self-help support services
 - Advocacy support services
 - If applicable, adherence to research guidelines and ethics when persons served are involved
 - Investigation and resolution of alleged infringement of rights.
 - The Client has the right to file a grievance with outside organizations, that include, but are not limited to, the following:
 - Board of Alcohol, Drug Addiction and Mental Health Services
447 East Broad Street, Columbus, Ohio 43215
614-224-1057

- Ohio Department of Behavior Health
30 East Broad Street, 36th floor, Columbus, Ohio 43215
614-466-2596
- Disability Rights Ohio
200 Civic Center Drive, Suite 300, Columbus, Ohio 43215
614-466-7264
- U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, civil rights regional office in Chicago
233 North Michigan Avenue, Suite 240, Chicago Illinois 60601
312-886-2359