



HIV Resources Administration Unit	
Title: Client Grievance	Policy Number: 0.100
Type: Quality/Risk Management	
Approved: Unit/Program Manager: <i>Gregory L. Balder</i>	Date Approved: <i>7/30/12</i>
Attachments: 1. Client Grievance Log 2. Client Grievance Form	
Effective Date: 7/30/2012	
Review Date:	Reviewed By:
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I. Purpose:

The purpose of this policy is to provide guidance and minimum standards for providers when establishing internal policies and procedures for processing grievances filed against them when delivering services funded by City and/or Federal grants administered through the City of Austin, HIV Resources Administration Unit. This policy applies regardless of the funding source being utilized to provide services to the particular client filing the grievance.

II. Scope:

The Goal of the Austin TGA is to resolve client concerns at the lowest possible level and following the agency guidelines is the preferred method to file a grievance, therefore; each direct service provider is responsible for developing its own grievance policy for the purpose of handling all client grievances internally. These internal grievance policies must meet the standards set out in the *HRAU Client Grievance Policy*. All internal grievance policies must be on file with the Administrative Agency.

III. Policy:

To provide an opportunity for clients to register grievances about services, staff and/or program practices provided by an agency receiving funding from City and/or Federal grants administered through the City of Austin HIV Resources

Administration Unit and to ensure clients' grievances are resolved, to the extent possible.

IV. Grounds for Grievances:

A grievance may be filed by a complaining party on one or more of the following grounds: improper application of rules, regulations, and procedures unfair or improper treatment; discrimination based on race, religion, color, sex (including sexual harassment), sexual orientation, age, disability, or national origin.

V. Service Agency Guidance

1. Client Notification of Policy and Procedure

All clients must receive a copy of each agency's grievance policy at intake, including the name of that agency's contact person (internal staff member who is responsible to receive complaints).

A signed or initialed note indicating receipt and understanding of the policy must be included in the client's record. Each agency must display their Grievance Policy and contact person's name in a place conspicuous to clients.

2. Guidance for Service Agencies on the Client Grievance Process

In the event a client has reason to present a grievance about a funded service, staff and/or the organization's practices, he/she should direct the verbal or written grievance to the service agency's **designated contact person**. The agency shall establish reasonable guidelines in responding to client grievances including notification that the agency received the grievance, a schedule of the process and timeline the agency will follow in addressing the client's concerns, and the final outcome and determination of the concerns.

If for any reason this procedure cannot be followed, the grievance may be directly submitted to the **Administrative Agent, Quality Management Coordinator**. The Quality Management Coordinator will meet with the client, review their concerns and provide the client with possible options including: not grieving, filing a grievance with the agency, or filing a grievance with the Administrative Agency. If the client elects to proceed with a grievance at the agency level the client will be advised to follow the agency's guidelines for filing a grievance until this process is completed or exhausted.

If the client is not satisfied with the results of the agency's determination, the client will be advised to contact the Administrative Agency and submit a formal verbal or written Appeal. The Administrative Agent, Quality Management Coordinator (QM Coordinator) will respond to the client within 14 working days after the grievance is received.

Clients need to be reassured that filing a grievance will not in any way jeopardize the services they receive.

The HIV Resources Administrative Unit recommends that, if Agency cannot resolve the grievance to the client's satisfaction, Mediation and/or Arbitration will be considered.

VI. Internal HRAU Client Grievance Procedure

1. In the event a client has reason to present a grievance about a funded service, staff and/or the organization's practices, he/she will be asked if they have first attempted to work within the Grievance Procedure of the service agency. If they report that they have not, then the HRAU QM Coordinator will contact the service agency to aid the client in the first step of submitting their grievance. The client will then be encouraged to submit their verbal or written grievance directly to the service agency's **designated contact person**. Should the client want to request an Appeal after working through the service agency's process, the QM Coordinator will ask the Client to complete a *Client Grievance Form*.
2. The QM Coordinator will review the *Client Grievance Form* and will contact the client to discuss specifics regarding the complaint within 14 days of receiving the complaint. The Coordinator will add any additional pertinent notes onto the Investigation portion of the form.
3. The QM Coordinator will then request the record of investigation from the appropriate service agency for review.
4. The QM Coordinator will complete an independent investigation and brief the HRAU Unit/Program Manager regarding the complaint and recommendations as to a determination.
5. The QM Coordinator will provide the client and the service agency's designated contact person with the determination of the Administrative Agency within 14 working days. The final determination section of the *Client Grievance Form* will be completed along with an explanation of the client and service agencies response.
6. Should there be a complaint; the complaint will be logged in the *Client Grievance Log*.

VII. Revision History

Revision	Date	Description of Changes	Completed By
0.0	7/10/2012	New Policy	GBean
