



Established 1971

OAR of Fairfax County, Inc. is committed to providing high quality services that guarantee that the rights of our clients are protected, while ensuring that the mission and goals of the agency are followed. This grievance process is available to provide a method of consideration for concerns, complaints, or grievances of the clients of OAR of Fairfax County, Inc.

A grievance can be filed by any client of this agency or his / her legal representative, any time while the client’s case is open through 30 days after a client’s case is closed. No person is allowed to discriminate against, withhold services or otherwise retaliate against a complainant or his / her representative for being in any way involved in a grievance proceeding. Lastly, no representative of OAR of Fairfax County, Inc. can deprive a complainant or his representative of his / her right to participate in the grievance process.

STEPS OF THE GRIEVANCE PROCESS

Any client of OAR of Fairfax County, Inc with a concern or complaint regarding his or her treatment or quality of services may exercise his / her right to file a grievance by following the steps listed here:

STEP 1

The client or his / her representative should first address the question, concern, complaint or grievance with the person perceived as the source of the confusion or conflict. It is anticipated that most conflict will be resolved in this step. If not resolved by direct communication at the source of the problem, or if the client or his / her representative does not wish to address the other person involved for any reason, they may proceed to Step 2.

STEP 2

The client or his/her legal representative may consult the immediate supervisor of the person perceived as the source of the confusion or conflict. In the event of an emergency, where the person’s supervisor is not available within seven days of the precipitating incident, the complaint can be addressed with another member of management on the same level as the supervisor. The complainant should explain the conflict and request that the supervisor serve as conflict resolution mediator. It is the duty of the supervisor to inform all involved parties of the conflict, collect information, conduct an investigation and interviews, and help facilitate a mutually agreeable resolution. The supervisor must complete a critical incident report to be maintained internally as a record of the complaint. If the client requests to remain anonymous, this desire must be expressly communicated to the supervisor. The client who request that his / her anonymity be maintained must understand that a full investigation may not be achieved. However, the request will be accommodated.

STEP 3

If a mutually agreeable resolution is not reached during Steps 1 or 2, the client or his / her legal representative may consult the Executive Director. At this level, the complaint must be placed in writing along with a description of steps taken thus far, the offered resolution and why this resolution is unacceptable. The client or his / her legal representative may request a meeting of all involved parties and solicit the assistance of the supervisor involved in Step 2 or the Executive Director as mediator. A mutually agreed upon neutral party may also serve as a mediator. Notes of this meeting must be taken for documentation purposes. The agency has 30



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days from the date of receipt of this grievance to host a meeting, and another 90 days after the meeting to conduct investigation and respond to complainant in writing.

Executive Director
OAR of Fairfax County, Inc.
10700 Page Ave., Suite 200
Fairfax, VA 22030

STEP 4

If after moving through Steps 1 through 3, the client or his/her legal representative still has not reached a mutually agreeable resolution, the client or his/her legal representative may contact OAR of Fairfax County’s Board of Directors President directly. The grievance must be submitted in writing communicating a description of the incident, steps taken thus far, the offered resolution and why this resolution is unacceptable. (If the client requests that his / her anonymity be maintained, should approach the grievance process with the understanding that a full investigation may not be achieved.) Grievances should be addressed to:

Chairman, Board of Directors
OAR of Fairfax County, Inc
10700 Page Ave., Suite 200
Fairfax, VA 22030-4000

The Board of Directors has 90 days after receipt of the written grievance to conduct investigation and respond to complainant in writing. Any and all findings, including final response will be shared with all involved parties. In the event that the Board of Directors suggests that further action be taken by agency staff to resolve the issue, complainant understands that the resolution may not be immediate and may involve actions that will take place over time.

SPECIAL CIRCUMSTANCES

Multiple Complainants

When two or more clients have presented individual grievances involving the same circumstances or a related group of circumstances relating to a single program,

OAR of Fairfax County Inc. may conduct the investigation as if it were one grievance. There would be a need to investigate each complaint separately, the timetable may exceed the timeframes in this policy, but shall include reasonable time limits for completing the investigation of each grievance. OAR of Fairfax County will notify the complainant of the special circumstance and of any resulting variances in this policy.

Multiple Grievances Filed by the Same Complainant

When a client or his/her legal representative has presented multiple grievances involving a variety of circumstances, the person hearing the grievances may conclude that variances (including, but not limited to additional investigation time) need to be made to this policy in order to ensure that a thorough and fair investigation of the facts can be made. The complainant will be notified of resulting variances caused by the special circumstances.