



I. Purpose:

To establish guidelines to express and resolve concerns, complaints and grievances and ensure a right to file a grievance without fear of retaliation or interference. Staff grievances are addressed by the Employee Grievance policy and procedure.

II. Policy:

Youth In Need (YIN) provides both informal and formal mechanisms for expressing and resolving concerns, complaints, and grievances. In the event where a client, client's parent/guardian, or community member has a concern, complaint, or grievance it will be heard and addressed in an appropriate, respectful, and confidential manner. YIN encourages clients, parents/guardians, and community members to express their concerns freely and actively seeks feedback to assess satisfaction with services.

III. Procedure:

INFORMAL

1. Routine and/or minor concerns and complaints can typically be resolved through discussions with program staff and/or program management.
2. If the complaint is initially made to program staff and they are unable to resolve the issue to the complainant's satisfaction program management must be notified, by the staff person, to attempt to address the situation. As always, any stakeholder can go to program management at any time with an unresolved concern or complaint.
2. If a concern is serious or is not able to be resolved by discussing with program staff and/or management, the client, parent/guardian, or community members may utilize our formal grievance procedure.

FORMAL

1. If the issue is not resolved by the informal procedure outlined above and the individual indicates dissatisfaction or continued concern the complainant should be made aware that YIN has a formal grievance process. Program management should ask if they would like to file a formal grievance. If so, program management should provide this Policy and Procedure.
2. In the case that the issue is with program management the grievance must be elevated to that person's supervisor.
3. The complainant should submit their grievance in written form. This document should outline the nature of the grievance, who was involved (accused and witnesses), when said incidents occurred, and where said incidents occurred. If this information is not contained in the written document the investigating individual should be sure to obtain this information at the outset of the process.
4. In the case of a grievance made against a staff person, program management will coordinate with Human Resources regarding the investigation. Finally, if the situation warrants, and the staff person



involved is part of a Early Learning Program (ELP), management may be required to comply with the Protocol for Reporting Staff Incident/Allegation/Misconduct to the Administration for Children and Families.

5. Program management or the most appropriate responsible individual will investigate (unless there is a potential legal violation at which point Human Resources may conduct the investigation) the grievance by gathering information from relevant sources as quickly as possible. The investigation should follow standard business practice and ensure all relevant parties are involved including the complainant, the accused, and any witnesses. Interviewed individuals should sign off on the documentation of their interview or provide a written statement as an attestation of their statement regarding the events. Guidance on completing investigations can be obtained from management or Human Resources.
6. Once the information has been collected, program management must prepare a grievance report which outlines the final determination and communication of said determination. Corresponding documentation should be kept by program management along with the grievance report. This documentation includes, the grievance, statements of the interviewees, final determination and communication of said determination.
7. A written response of the resolution, by the program Vice President, will be given within ten (10) business days, whenever possible, to the complainant. If the investigation exceeds ten (10) business days and therefore resolution and a written response is unable to be provided within the timeframe above the program Vice President (VP) must communicate with the complainant at the ten (10) business day mark and every business week thereafter until a resolution is determined. This written response must be filed with the case record, if applicable. In addition, the written response will be kept by the VP of the program, with the documentation related to the grievance.
8. If the situation cannot be resolved with the VP, the person filing the grievance may appeal and take the grievance to the Chief Program Officer (CPO) for resolution. The VP may also take the issue to the CPO for resolution if they deem necessary. In addition, if the situation cannot be resolved with the CPO, the person filing the grievance may appeal and take the grievance to the Chief Executive Officer (CEO). The CPO may also take the issue to the CEO for resolution if they deem necessary.
9. If the situation cannot be resolved with the CEO, the person filing the grievance may appeal and take the grievance to the Policy Council (ELP) and/or the Youth In Need Board of Directors (directed to the Board Chair) for resolution. The CEO may take the issue to the Policy Council (ELP) and the Youth In Need Board of Directors for resolution if they deem necessary.

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