



STATE OF CONNECTICUT

Office of Protection and Advocacy for
Persons with Disabilities

60B Weston Street, Hartford, CT 06120-1551

Phone: 1-860-297-4300, (V/TTY) 1-800-297-4380 (TTY); 1-860-566-8714 (FACSIMILE)
WWW.CT.GOV/OPAPD

AGENCY GRIEVANCE POLICY

Do You Have A Complaint About Protection and Advocacy Services?

It is the policy of the Office of Protection and Advocacy for Persons with Disabilities (P&A) to provide all clients and client-applicants with an opportunity to complain about advocacy and information and referral services through a Client Grievance Procedure. You may use this Client Grievance Procedure to complain about:

- The denial of P&A services;
- The type and/or quality of P&A services provided;
- The closure of a P&A case; or
- Alleged discrimination against a client or client-applicant by P&A.

It is the policy of P&A to provide services to all persons without regard to race, color, gender, religion, national origin, disability, sexual orientation or age.

To File a Complaint With P&A, You Must Take the Following Steps:

Step 1: Unless you can show good cause, you must contact the appropriate program director within 30 days to file a complaint. Initially, an attempt to resolve all grievances against the P&A system will be made by the program director, the staff person, and you. All efforts will be made to resolve the issues to meet your needs. This step may occur multiple times. If you do not know who the appropriate program director is, you may call our office to ask, or simply address a written complaint to "Program Director." The OPA program director will respond to the complaint within 15 days.

Your written complaint may be made either on the P&A grievance form, or just submitted in writing. An oral complaint can be recorded or a P&A staff member can support you in writing it. It should include your name, address, and telephone number. If you are not the client or applicant, include the client or applicant's name, address, telephone number, an explanation of your legal authority to act on this person's behalf, and a brief description of the complaint.

Step 2: If you continue to be dissatisfied, you can appeal that decision to the Executive Director within fifteen (15) days of the date of program director's decision.

The Executive Director or his/her designee may discuss the complaint with you in person, by telephone or by letter, in attempt to resolve it. You will have an opportunity to submit evidence relevant to the complaint. The Executive Director or designee will provide you with a written decision within fifteen (15) days from receipt of the grievance and any evidence you wish to submit for consideration of your appeal (i.e. memos, correspondence, interview notes, etc.).

The decision of the Executive Director, or designee, is P&A's final decision unless you are a client or client-applicant of the Protection and Advocacy for Individuals with Mental Illness (PAIMI) program.

Step 3 (applies only to clients and client-applicants of the PAIMI program): If you are not satisfied with the P&A Executive Director's decision, you have fifteen (15) days from the date of the decision to request an independent review to the Chair of the PAIMI Advisory Council. The PAIMI Advisory Council Chair or designee will appoint a committee consisting of the Chair and one (1) other member of the PAIMI Council, one (1) member of the P&A Advocacy Board.

The written decision of the appointed committee will be sent to you within twenty (20) days of the receipt of the request for review. **The decision of the independent committee is the final decision.**

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION:

In addition to this grievance procedure, depending on the nature of your complaint, you may have a right to file a lawsuit or an administrative complaint against P&A with a federal, state, or local civil rights enforcement agency. No person filing a complaint under this grievance procedure will be penalized with respect to receiving P&A services.

Step 2 and Step 3 Complaints should be made directly to:

Office of Protection and Advocacy
for Persons with Disabilities
60B Weston Street
Hartford, CT 06120

Telephone: 860-297-4300 or 1-800-842-7303 (voice and TTY)
Fax: 860-566-8714