

Participant Grievance Procedure

Subrecipients are responsible for developing a process of documenting participant complaints and grievances. A grievance can arise from employees or customers. Subrecipients' grievance procedure should be clearly outlined, with simple steps for the participant to follow that align with the organization's leadership structure.

Subrecipients shall notify CSDJFS in writing of all grievances initiated by participants that involve the services provided through their Subaward Agreement. The subrecipient shall submit any pertinent facts and/or resolutions of the grievances/complaints to CSDJFS within one (1) business day of resolution.

All grievances involving CSDJFS-funded participants must be reported to **Summit_Contracts@jfs.ohio.gov** and **Summit_Monitoring-TA@jfs.ohio.gov**.

Definitions

- **Participant:** Individuals, families, and legal guardians who apply for, use, receive, or benefit from the programs and services funded by CSDJFS.
- **Complaint:** A verbal or written expression of dissatisfaction with an aspect of service delivery, the manner of their treatment, programmatic outcomes, or their experiences.
- **Grievance:** A formal expression in writing of the participant's dissatisfaction or discomfort that might include service delivery, manner of treatment, programmatic outcomes, or their experiences. All complaints received in writing, physically or electronically, are considered grievances. If a participant does not wish to or is unable to submit a written expression of dissatisfaction, they may request that the formal grievance be documented by the staff person responding to the complaint in question.

General Guidance

Keeping a written record of all complaints/grievances and how they were handled is critical. It is a channel through which participants who feel they have been adversely affected by a subrecipient's activities can raise concerns or complaints to the agency and have those concerns addressed in a prompt and professional manner.

The following is broad guidance for developing a process that ultimately should tailor to the organizational practices and services of the subrecipient. Complaints and grievances should be resolved as soon as possible, and timeliness expectations will be enforced.

Written notice informing all participants of their right to make a complaint or file a grievance should be made available when conducting the intake or initial assessment with participants. The subrecipient should post their organization's complaint/grievance policy and procedures in a conspicuous location at sites where CSDJFS customers are served. The participant and staff member will sign and date an acknowledgement form which will be maintained in the participant's case file and a copy given to the participant.

Generally, the first step to resolving any participant concerns or complaints should be to seek informal resolution within the program at the same time as the issue arises. This process may begin with the participant's direct service provider staff. If a satisfactory resolution is not achieved at this level, staff should inform the participant of their right to submit a formal grievance. All informal efforts to resolve complaints, whether or not they succeed, should be documented in the participant's case record or progress notes.

Formal grievances must be routed to the subrecipient's management-level personnel for further action. The management personnel should contact the participant to discuss their concerns directly, as expeditiously as possible. The conversation and its' potential impact on the grievance should be documented. Then, notification to the participant in writing of management's findings or resolution should be provided within ten (10) calendar days after the grievance was initially filed.

If for any reason the complainant is not satisfied with management's resolution, they may contact the agency head (e.g., CEO, Executive Director) to further discuss the matter. The agency head shall conduct a review of the matter and will respond to the complainant in writing within ten (10) business days. The agency lead's decision and recommendations will be final.

Required Documentation for all Grievances

- Customer name, address, phone number, and email address
- Date of the report
- Date and nature of the complaint
- List the name(s), address, email address, and phone number of all persons involved in the matter that led to the grievance
- What outcome the complainant desires or expects
- Complainant's signature and date
- Action taken by the receiving supervisor; signature and date
- Action taken by the organization's management; signature and date
- How and when a resolution to the grievance was communicated to the complainant