

POLICY SUBJECT: Complaint & Grievance

SERVICE POLICY NUMBER: 235

Date of Initial Implementation: 2/1/86

Date of Current Revision: 10/17/2022

PURPOSE:

Progressive Community Services strives toward an inclusive community where all people have value. We are dedicated to providing the highest quality supports and customer experience possible. All people supported will be treated with dignity and respect through positive interactions. It is important that people supported have accessible ways to communicate if they need to file a complaint and/or grievance regarding supports through PCS, and receive timely resolution. Further, it is important that employees have channels to communicate complaints or grievances.

VALUES:

This policy reflects the following PCS Values:

- We Commit to Excellence
 - We are committed to best practice and continuous improvement
 - When something isn't right, we report it and fix it
 - We educate people and partners about processes, timelines, and next steps
- We Value All People
 - We respect the ideas, opinions, and feelings of others
 - We act in a way that radiates sincere and respectful behavior
 - We are advocates of people exercising their rights and responsibilities
- We Learn and Innovate
 - We seek and facilitate approaches that transform the way people unite, relate, and work

POLICY:

Every person served and their guardian/family member, or PCS employee, has the right to voice and/or file complaints and/or grievances and recommend changes in policies and services without restraint, interference, coercion, discrimination, barriers to supports or retaliation. Complaints and/or grievances can be made to any employee at Progressive Community Services (PCS). The ability to file a complaint and/or grievance will be accessible for everyone supported, and people supported can ask for assistance at any time. Employees are required to follow all complaint and grievance procedures.

The PCS Quality Officer will receive all formal complaints and grievances submitted by person's served or guardians/family members, and has the responsibility to facilitate resolution, based on PCS

policies/procedures. The Quality Officer will analyze complaint and grievance data from across the organization at least annually.

PCS Employees should utilize the guidelines in the PCS Employee Handbook for complaint and grievance procedures. Human Resources will serve as a facilitator for resolution in the event that a formal grievance is issued by any PCS employee.

Complaint and grievance data will be integrated into Performance Improvement and CQL activities and reviewed by the leadership team on an annual basis.

PROCEDURE:

- I. Informal Complaints
 - A. People Supported
 - a. PCS encourages all individuals and their guardians/family to speak directly with the person(s) involved where there is a complaint regarding supports and services.
 - b. In addition, this concern can also be addressed directly to the employee's supervisor and/or department manager when needed.
 - c. PCS Supervisors, Managers and Leadership team representatives are directed to provide follow up resolutions, and/or next steps regarding informal complaints within three business days.
 - d. PCS representatives should also share information on how to complete a formal complaint/grievance during the resolution.
 - B. Employees
 - a. Employees are encouraged to follow the policy outlined in the Employee Handbook, "Open Door" section. Employees can discuss the complaint with the person directly and/or bring the complaint to their PCS Supervisor, PCS Manager, Director or Human Resources.
 - C. Procedure
 - a. Department heads will track informal grievance data and report it to the Director's team on an annual basis.
- II. Formal Complaints
 - A. People Supported
 - a. If a complaint cannot be resolved at the most direct level, a person served, family/guardian or other stakeholder will be supported to file a formal complaint with the PCS Quality Officer. All PCS employees will offer the opportunity to do so and assist the person with the process, if needed.

- b. Complaints will go directly to the Quality Officer using the following methods.
 - i. PCS employees can assist the person with completing the PCS Complaint/Grievance Form, either on paper or through the link on the PCS Website. If done on paper, the employee will be responsible for ensuring the Quality Officer is notified via email or voicemail and the written complaint is emailed/scanned by the end of the employee's work day. Complaints filed through the website link will go directly to the Quality Officer.
 - ii. The person can report a complaint/grievance to the Quality Officer through mail, email or phone, either verbally, written or in the method that works best for them. The Quality Officer will transcribe the verbal report.
 - iii. The person can request a phone or in-person meeting with the Quality Officer for assistance in completing the complaint/grievance.

Quality Officer

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- iv. Complaints that come through social media channels (PCS Facebook/Instagram/Twitter) must be forwarded to the Quality Officer by the person who discovered it, or their designee, by the end of the business day.
- c. The Quality Officer will determine if the issue is potentially a violation of a person's rights, per the PCS Rights and Responsibilities policy. If it is, the Quality Officer will initiate the Client Right's Grievance found in Section III of this policy.
- d. For all complaints not determined to be a grievance, the Quality Officer will notify the appropriate employee/program/department, including the Manager to facilitate resolution of the complaint.
 - i. The person responsible for resolving the complaint will notify the Quality Officer of the final complaint resolution. Resolution to the complaint is expected to be complete within ten business days of the complaint being reported. The person who filed the complaint and all other appropriate people will be notified of the resolution

of the complaint within fifteen days of the complaint being reported. If there are circumstances that make these timelines impossible, the person filing the complaint will be notified of the extension.

- e. The Quality Officer will maintain data tracking reports on the complaints, resolutions and timeframes.

B. Employees

- a. Employees should follow the Employee Handbook for guidance on formal complaints/grievances. Refer to the sections on “Non-Discrimination and Harassment”, and “Equal Employment Opportunity”.
 - i. Incidents related to formal grievances should be promptly reported to any PCS Supervisor, PCS Manager, Director or Human Resources.

III. PCS Grievance/Rights Violation Procedure

- A. A grievance is a formal written complaint about a possible rights violation.
- B. It is the responsibility of the Quality Officer to accept and oversee the process of any grievance filed by a person served or other person or agency on behalf of a person served. The Quality Officer will assist the person served in filing a grievance and will investigate the grievance on behalf of the Griever.
- C. The grievance must be written on the PCS Complaint and Grievance Form or on the website link, whether with assistance to the person served or not.
- D. The grievance must be signed and dated by the person served, the person filing the grievance on behalf of the person served or have an attestation by the client advocate that the written grievance is a true and accurate representation of the person’s grievance.
- E. If available, the grievance must include the date, approximate time, description of the incident and names of individuals involved in the incident or situation being grieved.
- F. The Quality Officer will review the grievance and determine if the grievance should be sent to the Department of Mental Health (DMH) for an abuse/neglect allegation.
 - i. If it is determined an abuse/neglect allegation, DMH will conduct the investigation, and the PCS process will conclude.
- G. Within three (3) business days of receiving the grievance, the Quality Officer will provide written acknowledgement that includes the date the grievance was received, a summary of the grievance, an overview of the grievance investigation

- process (or information about DMH's investigation process), a timetable for completing the investigation, and contact information for the Quality Officer.
- H. If applicable, the Quality Officer will conduct a thorough investigation. All parties involved, including applicable employees, supervisors, witnesses, and the person(s) served, will be interviewed to ensure all relative information is obtained.
 - I. Within fifteen (15) business days of receiving the grievance, the Quality Officer will make a resolution decision on the grievance outlining the actions to be taken to address the grievance, if applicable. A formal notification of the resolution decision will be given to the person served and/or the person's representative. Any extenuating circumstances indicating that this time period would need to be extended must be documented in the grievance file and written notification given to the person served and person(s) filing grievances on behalf of the person served.
 - J. If the grievor or his/her representative is dissatisfied with the results of the resolution, he/she may file another grievance with the PCS Executive Director. The Quality Officer is expected to support the grievor or person acting on their behalf with facilitating the next steps in this process.
 - K. If the complaint or grievance is in regard to the Quality Officer, then it should be submitted directly to the Assistant Executive Director, Operations. The Assistant Executive Director, Operations will complete all applicable steps in the grievance procedure.
 - L. If the complaint or grievance is in regard to the PCS Executive Director, then it will be elevated by the Quality Officer to the Chairperson of the PCS Board of the Directors.
 - M. People served and their representatives have the right to contact and/or file a grievance at any time with any of the organizations listed below. These organizations are not affiliated with PCS, and would have their own policies/procedures to address grievances.

Albany Satellite Office Assistant Director

Jodi Manville 660-771-6100/fax 660-771-6198

Kansas City Regional Office Director

Lesla Tracy 816-889-3400

DMH office of Consumer Safety

800-364-9687 (M-F 8am-5pm)

MO Department of Senior Services

800-392-0210 24-hour

Complete and mail in a complaint form

<http://dmh.mo.gov/constituentservices/docs/GrievanceClientFormrevised52016.pdf>

Email

constituentsvcs@dmh.mo.gov

Or, write to the Department of Mental Health, Attn: Constituent Services,
1706 E. Elm St., Jefferson City, MO 65101.

- IV. PCS will maintain the records of written grievances for seven years.
 - A. Records will include a copy of the grievance, documentation of the grievance resolution, and a copy of the letter to the grievant reflecting the resolution.

- V. Complaint and Grievance Data
 - A. At least annually, analysis of complaint and grievance data will be completed by the Quality Officer. Information in this report will include the number of grievances/complaints received, type of grievances/complaints and the resolution status of each grievance/complaint. This data will be included in Basic Assurance Monitoring data for the organization. The report will include analysis and review of trends with recommendations for improvement, when applicable.
 - B. Complaint and grievances reports will be reviewed at least annually by Director's team to determine trends in complaints and identify areas for performance improvement and action to be taken.

- VI. All PCS employees are required to follow client complaint and grievance procedures. PCS will train all employees on the policy/procedures upon hire and annually thereafter.

- VII. Each person served and their guardian/family, as applicable, will be provided with information on how to access the PCS Complaint and Grievance procedure.
 - A. Support Coordinators and Family Navigators will review the procedures with the person served in a way they are comfortable with, in a manner that is understandable to them, and ensure that the action will not result in retaliation or other barriers to supports.
 - i. Family Navigation will include information on how to access the policy on their survey link, that is sent to people supported after each point of contact.

- ii. Support Coordination will review this as part of the person's support annual plan and paperwork. Documentation of receipt and review will be kept in the person's electronic file.

B. Upon request, any person may receive a copy of the policy and procedure.

VIII. PCS Complaint and Grievance Procedures will be posted in the PCS Administration building, as well as accessibly through the PCS website. People receiving services will be made aware of where this information can be found and accessed for them to voice a complaint of grievance. Accommodations can be made for people supported, and can be requested to any PCS employee and/or the Quality Officer.