



STUDENT RESIDENT GRIEVANCE POLICY

PURPOSE:

To outline the procedure by which student residents may express a complaint and the process WHSR personnel follow to resolve the complaint.

POLICY:

It is the policy of WHSR that all student residents have the means to file complaints and reach a resolution. The conditions for expressing a grievance is defined as dissatisfaction with decisions concerning the student resident and/or services provided to the student resident.

Student residents have the right to file a complaint or grievance without interference or fear of retaliation. All staff members are to be attentive and respectful to any grievance registered by a student resident and are prohibited from discouraging, intimidating, or seeking retribution against student residents who seek to exercise their rights or file a complaint or grievance.

Student residents have the right to timely notification of the resolution and receive an explanation of any further appeal, rights, or recourse.

GLOSSARY OF TERMS

- ❑ Student Residents: Individuals and families that use, receive or benefit from the programs and services at WHSR. Student Residents can include community partners and legal guardians.
- ❑ Complaint: For student residents, a complaint is a verbal expression of dissatisfaction with, including, but not limited to aspects of service delivery, manner of treatment, outcomes, or experiences.
- ❑ Grievance: For student residents, grievances are formal expressions of dissatisfaction or discomfort that can include, but is not limited to service delivery, manner of treatment, outcomes, or experiences. All complaints received in writing, including email, are considered formal grievances. If a student resident does not wish to or is unable to submit a written expression of dissatisfaction, he or she may request the formal grievance be documented by the staff person receiving the verbal report.

GENERAL PROCEDURES:

1. Notices informing all student residents of their right to make a complaint are posted in an obvious location in the office.
2. At the initial assessment, all student residents will be informed of their right to make a complaint, the process by which to do so, and the way in which the organization will respond. The student resident and staff member will sign and date an acknowledgment form which will be maintained in the student resident's case file and a copy will be given to the student resident.
3. In general, the first step to resolving any student resident concern or complaint should be to seek informal resolution within the program when a dispute arises. This process may begin with the student resident's direct service worker or Program Director/Coordinator. If a satisfactory resolution is not achieved at this level, staff should inform the student resident of his/her right to submit a formal grievance.
 - a. Informal efforts to resolve complaints and grievances should be documented in the student resident's case record, progress notes, and/or tracking logs as applicable.
 - b. If the student resident believes for any reason that they cannot approach program staff with their concerns, they may address their concerns directly with the Executive Director.
5. At the time of a complaint, the student resident will be provided by staff an additional copy of the student resident grievance policy. The staff member will review the procedure and clarify any issues for the student resident. WHSR will acknowledge and document the receipt of all formal grievances.
6. Formal grievances should be submitted to the Program Director/Coordinator (receiving supervisor) for review, or as appropriate to the Executive Director. Upon receipt of a grievance, the Program Director/Coordinator should submit copies of that grievance to the Executive Director.
7. The receiving staff should interview the student resident to discuss his/her concerns directly. The receiving staff will document in writing any communication regarding the grievance. This information will be submitted to the Executive Director for review and/or consultation with the receiving staff within seventy-two hours of receipt of the complaint.
8. The Executive Director may complete an Internal Program Review to determine the validity of the grievance.
 - a. Internal Program Reviews completed by the Executive Director will be submitted to the Chairperson of the Board of Directors for review and follow-up as deemed appropriate.
9. The validity of the grievance will be determined within fourteen business days and the outcome conveyed to the student resident within twenty-four hours of the decision.
10. At this point in time, if the student resident remains dissatisfied with the outcome, they may make one final appeal to the Executive Director. Appeals to the Executive Director will be determined within seven business days and the results conveyed to the student resident within twenty-four hours of a decision.

11. Copies of all correspondence regarding the grievance will be submitted to the Executive Director as documentation of the resolution of the complaint.

12. All student residents/families have the right to initiate a complaint with any of the agencies that collaborate with the agency's programs. In instances where the student resident wishes to forward a complaint to an outside authority, staff is to provide the student resident with assistance including pens, paper, postage and access to a telephone upon request.

13. Results from all written grievances/complaints will be forwarded to the Executive Director. A quarterly summary of student resident/family complaints will be prepared for review by the Board of Directors.

14. As required, legal counsel will be sought to intervene in situations that are not successfully resolved through the prior avenues. WHSR will not in any way restrict, discourage or interfere with student resident communication with an attorney for the purpose of filing a complaint.

15. Should any complaint warrant further investigation beyond the scope of this policy, WHSR will communicate with the student resident/family making the complaint in no greater than 30-day intervals.