



Behavioral Health | Developmental Disabilities Emergency Housing | Public Health

Information about Your Mental Health Services and Grievances

THE CONTACT PERSON IF YOU HAVE QUESTIONS CONCERNING YOUR GRIEVANCE IS Vicki Guse, Administrator.

What is a Grievance?

A Grievance is an expression of dissatisfaction about some aspect of service such as, quality of care or services provided, aspects of interpersonal relationships such as rudeness of a provider or employee, failure to respect your rights, or other issues you have not been able to resolve by talking to us about what you are not happy about. A Grievance cannot be about the authorization of or changes to your previously authorized services or denial of a requested service.

What do I do to file a Grievance?

- You may file a Grievance orally or in writing.
- You can ask for help with your Grievance. The Ombuds service is free to you or you may choose someone else to help you if you wish. Interpreter and TTY/TTD services are available if you need them. You may access the Ombuds at any time during the time we are addressing your Grievance.
- When we receive your Grievance we may contact you directly within one working day to tell you we have received it. We must respond to you in writing within five (5) working days to acknowledge that we have received your Grievance even if we have spoken verbally to you first.

What happens after I file my Grievance?

- The person who makes the decision about your Grievance will not have been involved in any previous level of review or decision-making.
- If your Grievance involves a clinical matter we must make sure the person or people making the decision about the clinical matter will be a Mental Health Professional with appropriate clinical expertise.
- You or your designated representative will have a reasonable opportunity to present evidence about your Grievance if you wish to do so.
- After we have completed a review, we will send you a letter telling you about our decision. If you are not happy with our process or decision, you can also go to the Spokane County Regional Support Network (SCRBHO) or you can contact the Ombuds. The SCRBHO is the agent that funds your mental health services with us.
- All Grievances, resolved or unresolved, are reported to the SCRBHO.
- There are timelines we and the SCRBHO must follow. Normally resolution of the grievance is thirty days from the time you submit your Grievance to us. This time can be extended by you if it is in your best interest or by us if we or the SCRBHO need additional time to make a decision and it is in your best interest. The time to resolve the grievance cannot be longer than ninety days.
- We must send you a letter of resolution even if you are no longer in services.

What Do I Do If My Grievance is not resolved?

We will do everything we can to resolve your Grievance to your satisfaction, but this may not always be possible. If your Grievance is not resolved by us or the SCRBHO, or we or the SCRBHO have not responded to you, you may file a request for an administrative Fair Hearing. You can find more information about a Fair Hearing in your Mental Health Benefits Booklet or by contacting the Mental Health Ombuds. Your request for a Fair Hearing must go to the Office of Administrative Hearings, or OAH. The OAH is not part of DSHS, DBHR, or the SCRBHO and is an independent state agency

You may call them at 1-800-583-8271 for more information about your right to a Fair Hearing. Or you may send your request to:

Office of Administrative Hearings

PO Box 42489

Olympia, WA 98504

You can request help in filing for a Fair Hearing from us, the SCRBHO, or the Ombuds Services: Adams, Ferry, Grant, Lincoln, Okanogan, Pend Oreille, and Stevens Counties; Phone: 1-800-346-4529, 1-509-766-2568 ext. 314

Contact Information: If you need information or help, call SCRBHO at 509-477-5722 or 1-877-273-5864

Other Resources to Help You: Ombuds Services: Spokane County; Phone: 1-866-814-3409 or 1-509-477-4666 Fax: 1-509-477-4667