

# Big Bend Community Based Care Policy & Procedure

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**Series:** 1500: Clients Rights

**Policy Name:** Client Inquiries, Complaints and Grievances

**Policy Number:** 1502

**Origination Date:** 02/02/2009

**Revised:** Board Meeting of 12/13/2018

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## Policy

It is the policy of Big Bend Community Based Care, Inc. (BBCBC), to hear all client and network provider inquiries and complaints and to support the dignity and rights of all. BBCBC defines Inquiries as an act of asking for information. Sometimes inquiries are accompanied with complaints or may be the source of customer dissatisfaction, therefore BBCBC delineated the definition for the purpose of quality improvement processes. Complaints are defined as any expressed form of dissatisfaction. Complaints and grievances are terms often used interchangeably. For the purposes of this policy, BBCBC manages all inquiries, complaints, and grievance with the same level of responsiveness.

Inquiries, complaints and grievances may be made by email, mail, telephone, in person, or received from Department of Children and Families (DCF).

All child welfare-related complaints will be handled through the BBCBC Operations Manager (OM) for Circuits 2 & 14. All substance abuse and mental health-related complaints will be handled through the BBCBC Network Coordinators (NC) for Circuits 1, 2 & 14. It is the responsibility of the OM/NC to respond to all inquiries as well as investigate and seek resolution to all complaints.

The OM/NC will take appropriate steps to mitigate the effects of any violation of client's rights. This Policy assures that grievances are resolved quickly and at the lowest level possible.

## Procedure

### A. Complaint Investigative Process.

1. The OM/NC is responsible for investigating the circumstance of the alleged rights violation, and if appropriate shall take steps to resolve the issue.
2. The OM/NC may consult with the Chief Executive Officer (CEO), Chief Operating Officer (COO), Children's Legal Services, CBC Directors, and/or other professionals in reviewing and acting upon complaints/grievances.
3. For assignments received from DCF, the OM/NC shall communicate the investigation and resolution to the COO and/or the CEO for review and submission.
4. For all other complaints/grievances, the OM/NC or BBCBC recipient of the complaint shall communicate the results of the investigation and resolution to the grievant and will document the action taken for record-keeping purposes.
5. Upon receipt of a complaint, the OM/NC will identify a due date to respond to the grievant if a date is not already assigned. It is the policy of BBCBC to respond as quickly as possible.

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6. For Deaf or Hard of Hearing customer complaints of wrongfully denied access to services or discrimination, customers will be informed that they may also file externally with the state and federal government at:

The Department Of children and Families - Office of Civil Rights

1317 Winewood Blvd.

Building 1, room 110

Tallahassee, FL 32399-0700

850-487-1901

*and/or;*

US Department of Health and Human Services Office of Civil Rights

Atlanta Federal Center, Suite 3B

7061 Forsyth Street, SW

Atlanta, GA 30303-8909

404-562-7881

## **B. Decision and Disposition.**

1. If the results of the investigation indicate that a BBCBC employee has violated the rights of a client:
  - a. The results will need to be reported to the CEO and COO.
  - b. The CEO/COO will determine what course of action to take against the employee violating the rights of the client.
2. If the results of the investigation indicate that a subcontracted provider employee has violated the rights of a client, the CEO may impose sanctions against the subcontracted provider.
3. If the complaint/grievance is not resolved to the client's satisfaction, the issue may be referred to the COO.
4. The issue shall be resolved as quickly as possible and an update shall be provided to the complainant.

## **C. No Retaliation.**

1. There shall be no retaliation against any individual or person served, or employee for having filed or assisted on the filing of a complaint/grievance, or for investigation or acting on a complaint/grievance.
2. Any employee who becomes aware of any such retaliatory action shall immediately report it to the CEO and COO.

## **D. Continuous Quality Improvement Process.**

1. All inquiries, complaints and grievances are entered electronically into an online complaint form.

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2. The Quality Assurance Unit will review the data available through the SharePoint access to analyze the information to determine trends within the Circuit that need to be addressed.
3. These trends will be reported to COO to determine what course of action needs to be taken.