

# Grievance Policy

## **Policy:**

A person has the opportunity to make a complaint and to receive a timely response regarding any aspect of their experience with JF&CS.

## **Definition(s):**

- *Grievance*: an official statement of a complaint, either verbal or written, and expressed without repercussion.

## **Procedure:**

### *Format of Complaints*

- It is preferred that grievances to be resolved verbally and with the immediate staff involved and/or their supervisor. The immediate staff involved will provide an opportunity for full discussion of the grievance with the person and make a good faith effort to resolve the matter.
- A formal complaint must be made in writing using the “Grievance Form” or in another written format that contains the same elements.
- If the person is unable to make a complaint in writing and wishes to do so, the SVP of Operations, or his or her designee, may assist the person with filling out the form.
- Staff will report all grievances to their supervisor.

### *Responding to Grievances – General*

- All grievances made in writing will be investigated and will receive a written response within thirty (30) business days. If greater time is necessary, the SVP of Operations will notify the individual of the delay within 30 days and inform the individual of the expected time frame for completion of the review.
- If the client is not satisfied with the response to their grievance, the client may submit a written appeal to the CEO; a copy will go to the SVP of Operations
- The CEO will make a decision and respond in writing to the client within sixty (60) days after receipt of the written appeal.
- The decision of an appeal of a grievance by the CEO shall be final and not subject to further appeal.

### *Responding to Grievances – Privacy Practices Related*

- All grievances pertaining to the agency’s privacy practices will be addressed to the Privacy Officer.
- All grievances made in writing will be investigated and will receive a written response within thirty (30) business days. If greater time is necessary, the Privacy Officer will notify the individual of the delay within 30 days and inform the individual of the expected time frame for completion of the review.
- The Privacy Officer will determine if there is cause to believe that a violation of privacy policies occurred and the course of action to be taken:

- If no violation has occurred, the complaint will be considered closed and a written notice of this shall be provided to the individual who made the complaint
- If cause exists to believe that a violation has occurred, the Privacy Officer, in conjunction with the employee's supervisor, will be responsible for determining if:
  - Training is necessary;
  - A change in policy is necessary; and/or
  - Employee discipline or sanctions, up to and including dismissal, are necessary
- Upon request, and if the complaint involves part of the covered entity, the Privacy Officer will supply information to an individual on how to file a complaint with the Office for Civil Rights of the Department of Health and Human Services. Such information is also contained in the Notice of Privacy Practice.

#### *Documentation*

- A copy of all written grievances received by the SVP of Operations or Privacy Officer will be shared with the appropriate supervisor.
- The SVP of Operations will maintain complete documentation of the grievance, the Agency's review and disposition of the matter, including a record of any changes to policies or procedures or the imposition of sanctions against members of the workforce, if any. All documents relating to the complaint and investigation will be retained for a period of at least seven (7) years from the date of their creation
- Copies of grievances are **not** filed in the client record

#### *Miscellaneous*

- No individual or workforce member shall be retaliated against for filing a complaint
- The Grievance Policy and Grievance Form is posted on the JF&CS website and available by request from any JF&CS employee.
- On an annual basis, the SVP of Operations will review all agency grievances and report to the staff Risk Management Team and the Board Compliance and Risk Management Committee.

#### **Appendix:**

1. Grievance Form