

### III – 6 Clients and Public Complaints

---

Reviewed/updated: April 2014

Supersede: 2001, September 2004, September 2012

#### **Policy**

The Association serves all clients without regard to race, colour, age, sex, gender, identity, ancestry, sexual preference, national origin, economic status, religious creed, parenthood, marital status, contraceptive preference, or disability.

To ensure protection of client's rights, whether the individual is a consumer or a general user of the Association's services, the complaints procedure is made known to clients by posting in the waiting areas of the Association's offices and on our web site.

A complaint is defined as a petition on the part of a client regarding their dissatisfaction with a provider due to the client's perception of the quality of service, their treatment by the staff, or the operations and policies of the Association. Complaints may be directed against the Association or its workers.

#### **Procedure**

When a client, consumer, family member or service user's unresolved issues meet the definition of a complaint and the individual has requested and received an explanation of the complaint procedures, the following should occur:

1. The client, or person acting on the client's behalf, is instructed to file a complaint in writing. The worker, who is directly involved with the client, will be expected to work with the individual(s) to resolve the complaint. In an emergency situation, the worker will take the complaint to the supervisor immediately.
2. The worker investigates the situation and takes action to resolve the client's complaint to the furthest extent possible. The client is notified of the outcome of the investigation and action taken. This may include providing education to the client regarding the Association's procedures and limitations of services. The worker informs the supervisor of the complaint and resolution.
3. If the worker is unable to resolve the disagreement with the client, the options of referring the client to the worker's immediate supervisor will be presented to the client. The supervisor will contact the client within three 3 days to attempt to resolve the complaint.
4. If the complaint is not resolved by the supervisor, the client may be referred to the Program Manager or Executive Director. Failing that, the complaint will be referred to the Board of Directors.
5. The Executive Director or designate will review all complaints on an annual basis or as they occur. The Association will retain complaints for 5 years from the date of creation or the last date in effect, whichever is later.