

# Participant Grievance Procedures

## **Definitions:**

The Participant Grievance Procedure provides a structured process for you to voice concern or complaints about the services you have or are currently receiving and to seek legitimate resolutions to those concerns or complaints.

## **Purpose:**

The Participant Grievance Procedure documents your complaints and the efforts of NWFS to resolve those complaints in order to ensure that services are maintained at competent levels of quality.

## **Procedures:**

There are two types of grievances that can be made when you, the NWFS' participant, believe you have been unfairly treated regarding services received.

### **An Informal Grievance:**

All grievances should be resolved informally, whenever possible. NWFS encourages you to seek resolution directly from the staff person(s) in question. To make an Informal Grievance or complaint, you, the participant, should bring your complaint to the NWFS staff person who is directly involved in the situation if at all possible. If that approach is not an option, the program supervisor could contact you to discuss your concerns or will arrange and facilitate a meeting/conversation if necessary within eight (8) working days. You should explain your complaint as clearly as possible. Once the complaint is understood, agency staff should be prepared to suggest possible solutions to the problem. We will try to find solutions that will satisfy all parties involved. If possible, Informal Grievance steps should be completed before filing a Formal Grievance. If the grievance concerns issues of inappropriate conduct on the part of the staff person, then you should direct your concern in written to the program supervisor or Executive Director. Circumstances of alleged sexual harassment, fraud, unethical behavior, or highly unprofessional conduct on the part of any Northwest Family Services staff member are to be reported immediately to the Executive Director and a formal investigation will occur.

**If you have questions about this Notice, please contact Northwest Family Services Office at 503-546-6377 or speak with the Manager of the program from which you received services. Northwest Family Services will not intimidate, threaten, coerce, discriminate against, or take any other form of retaliatory action against any person filing a complaint or inquiring about how to file a complaint.**



**Appeals:**

Individuals and their legal guardians may appeal entry, transfer, and grievance decisions as follows:

- a. If the individual or guardian is not satisfied with the decision, the individual or guardian may file an appeal in writing within ten working days of the date of the program administrator's response to the grievance or notification of denial for services. The appeal shall be submitted to the Division (see below);
- b. If requested, program staff shall be available to assist the individual;
- c. The Division shall provide a written response within 10 working days of the receipt of the appeal; and
- d. If the individual or guardian is not satisfied with the appeal decision, they may file a second appeal in writing within ten working days of the date of the written response to the Division Director.

**A Formal Grievance:**

After following the Informal Grievance procedure, if you still feel a need to file a formal complaint, please complete a COMPLAINT/GRIEVANCE FORM and email ([service@nwfs.org](mailto:service@nwfs.org)), mail or hand-carry this form to our main office located at 6200 SE King Road Portland, OR 97222, attention to the QA/QI Department. This document is available in English, Spanish and Russian, and can be provided to you upon request in alternate formats for individuals with disabilities. Reply envelopes are also provided to mail the completed COMPLAINT/GRIEVANCE FORM. Forms and envelopes are always available in our main office reception area, and you can print forms from our website [www.nwfs.org](http://www.nwfs.org). We encourage you, if the informal resolution was not possible, to submit your complaint directly to the NWFS office by email, mail or delivering it in person.

In cases of alleged sexual harassment, unethical behavior, or highly unprofessional conduct, you may by-pass any of the steps in both grievance procedures, and direct your concern in writing to the Executive Director at any time. The Executive Director has sole and final authority in determining a resolution to Formal Grievances.

Your formal complaint regarding service/s received through NWFS will be processed in the following manner:

1. First, the complaint is to be reviewed and responded by the Quality Assurance/Improvement Specialist within no less than 30 days.
2. Complaints that are not resolved at this meeting will be reviewed by NWFS staff, and you may be contacted again for another meeting or phone conference. You will receive a response in no more than 30 days from the INITIAL COMPLAINT RESPONSE LETTER.
3. Your COMPLAINT/GRIEVANCE FORM, and any other documentation for the case, will be kept by the QA/QI Specialist.
4. If you are not satisfied with the response from NWFS, then contact: (a) The Division (Cash Payments): 503-945-5763/1-800-375-2863. (b) The CMHP: Clackamas – 503-650-5696 or Multnomah County – 503-988-3076, (c) Disability Rights Oregon: 503-243-2081 and (d) The applicable managed care organization: Health Share of Oregon - 503-416-8090, 1-888-519-3845 or TTY/TDD 711 (<http://healthshareoregon.org/formembers/appeal-and-grievances.html>).