



GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE

WHO MAY FILE:

1. Clients of Disability Rights Maine (DRM).
 - Parents of a minor child may file on behalf of their child.
 - Guardians may file on behalf of their wards.
2. Applicants who believe they are eligible for DRM's services.

BASIS FOR GRIEVANCE:

Clients or applicants may submit a grievance:

1. if they have been refused representation by DRM;
2. if DRM has terminated representation; or
3. if they believe they are not being appropriately represented.

SUBMITTED IN WRITING OR IF UNABLE TO WRITE:

1. Clients and applicants should submit the grievance in writing.
2. If the client or applicant is unable to submit the grievance in writing, they may call DRM and the Executive Director will designate a staff person to assist the client or applicant by collecting the information as outlined in the next section.

CONTENTS OF GRIEVANCE:

The grievance should include

1. a statement of what happened,
2. which agency staff were involved, and
3. as specifically as possible, what the client or applicant was dissatisfied with.

CONFIDENTIALITY:

DRM will keep all information about you confidential and will not release any information without your written permission.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S DECISION:

Within fourteen (14) days of receiving the grievance, the Executive Director or designee, will investigate and reply to the client in writing. The written reply must include:

1. the agency's findings, and

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2. if the grievance is substantiated, what the Executive Director will do to correct the problem.

APPEAL OF EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S DECISION TO BOARD; APPOINTMENT OF BOARD PANEL:

The client or applicant can appeal the Executive Director's decision to the Board of Directors. If the client or applicant chooses to appeal, the Executive Director will immediately forward the appeal to the President of the Board. Within seven (7) days, the President will appoint a panel of three Board members to review the appeal, and will appoint one of the panel members as Chairperson.

REVIEW BY BOARD PANEL/HEARING (OPTIONAL):

The panel may review the appeal based on the written documents generated during the grievance, or, at its discretion, may hold a hearing to review the appeal. In either event, the Board members must issue a decision in writing within twenty-one (21) days of their appointment to the panel.

IF HEARING IS HELD:

If the panel chooses to hold a hearing, the Chairperson must immediately notify the client or applicant in writing. The notification must include the date, time, and location of the hearing, and what staff and Board members will be present. Hearings are informal, and the rules of evidence do not apply. The client or applicant has the right to representation by a person of his or her choosing, and the right to give testimony.

PANEL DECISION FINAL:

The decision of the panel is final.