

Client Grievance Policy

Merrick, Inc.

1.00 Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to promote service recipient rights by providing persons served and/or their legal representatives with a simple process to address grievances or grievances.

2.00 Application

This policy applies to each client receiving services from Merrick, Inc., or their legal representative, and any individual who is either employed by, volunteers, or has a service agreement with Merrick, Inc.

3.00 Policy Statement

Each person served and/or legal representative will be encouraged and assisted in continuously sharing ideas and expressing concerns in informal discussions with management staff and in support team meetings. Each concern or grievance will be addressed and attempts will be made to reach a fair resolution in a reasonable manner.

Should a person and/or legal representative feel an issue or grievance has not or cannot be resolved through informal discussion, they are to be reminded of their option to file formal grievance. Staff and persons served and/or legal representatives will receive training regarding the informal and formal grievance procedure. This policy will be provided, orally and in writing, to all persons served and/or their legal representatives. If a person served and/or legal representative feel that their formal grievance has not or cannot be resolved by other staff, they may bring their complaint grievance to the Executive Director by contacting:

John Wayne Barker
3210 Labore Road, Vadnais Heights, Minnesota 55110
651.789.6209 or jwb@merrickinc.org

The Program Training & Resource Manager will ensure that during the service initiation process that there is orientation for the person served and/or legal representative to the company's policy on addressing grievances. When requested by the client or their legal representative, at the company's sole discretion interpretative services may be provided throughout the grievance process for client's that do not communicate verbally or speak English. If desired, assistance from an outside agency (i.e., ARC, MnDLC, or MN Office of the Ombudsman) may be sought to assist with the grievance.

Persons served and/or legal representatives may file a grievance without threat or fear of reprisals, discharge, or the loss of future provision of appropriate services and supports.

4.00 Procedure

4.10 Reporting grievances:

- 4.11 All grievances affecting a client's health and safety will be responded to immediately by the Support Service Staff (SSS) or Program Support Manager. Grievances not resolved to a client's satisfaction may become a grievance using the process outlined in 4.20

- 4.12 Any employee aware of a client's unresolved grievance can assist them to initiate the formal grievance policy by contacting their Program Support Manager.
- 4.13 At least annually, each client will be informed of who is on their support team and can assist them in resolving grievances or grievances.
- 4.20 Making a formal grievance:
- 4.21 All grievances affecting a person's health and safety will be responded to immediately by the Program Support Manager.
- 4.22 SSS will immediately inform the Program Support Manager of any grievances and will follow this policy and procedure. If at any time, staff assistance is requested in the grievance process, it will be provided. Additional information on outside agencies that can also provide assistance to the person served and/or legal representative are listed at the end of this procedure.
- 4.23 If for any reason a person served and/or legal representative chooses to use the formal grievance process, they will then notify in writing or discuss the formal grievance process with the Program Support Manager.
- 4.24 When a formal grievance is made, the Program Support Manager will initially respond in writing to the person that initiated the grievance within 14 calendar days of receipt.
- 4.25 The Program Support Manager will first determine if the situation qualifies as a grievance. If not, this determination will be forwarded to both the reporter and the Program Director and the grievance closed. If the reporter is pleased with the response given and does not request a reconsideration within 5 working days a satisfactory response will be documented in their file and the grievance closed. If the reporter is not pleased with the response, within 5 working days from the receipt the reporter can submit additional information for reconsideration directly to the Program Director. After reviewing the additional information the Program Director will either instruct the investigator to conduct a full investigation or advise the reporter that the situation does not qualify as a grievance and the case closed. There is no procedural reconsideration of this determination.
- 4.26 If the person and/or the legal representative are not satisfied with the Program Support Manager's response, they will then notify in writing or discuss the formal grievance with the Executive Director who will then respond within 14 calendar days.
- 4.27 All grievance must and will be resolved within 30 calendar days of receipt. If it is not possible the Executive Director will document the reason for the delay and the plan for the resolution.
- 4.28 If the person served and/or legal representative believe their rights have been violated, they retain the option of contacting the county's Adult or Child Protection Services or the Department of Human Services at any time in this process. In addition, persons may contact advocacy agencies (listed at the end of this policy) and state they would like to

file a formal grievance regarding their services, provider company, etc.

4.30 Grievance review:

4.31 As part of the grievance review and resolution process, a grievance review will be completed by the Program Director and documented by using the *Internal Review* form regarding the grievance. The grievance review will include an evaluation of whether:

4.311 Related policies and procedures were followed.

4.312 The policies and procedures were adequate.

4.313 There is a need for additional staff training.

4.314 The grievance is similar to past grievances with the persons, staff, or services involved.

4.315 There is a need for corrective action by the company to protect the health and safety of persons served.

4.32 Based upon the results of the grievance review, the company will develop, document, and implement an action plan designed to correct current lapses and prevent future lapses in performance by staff or the company, if any.

4.33 A written summary of the grievance and a notice of the grievance resolution to the person served and/or legal representative and case manager will be provided by using the *Grievance Summary and Resolution Notice* form. This summary will:

4.331 Identify the nature of the grievance and the date it was received.

4.332 Include the results of the grievance review.

4.333 Identify the grievance resolution, including any corrective action.

4.40 Archival.

4.41 The *Grievance Summary and Resolution Notice* will be maintained in the service recipient record.

STATE AND COUNTY ADVOCACY AGENCIES

ARC Northland	(218) 726-4725	424 W Superior St; Suite 201, Duluth, MN 55802 www.arcnorthland.org cbourdage@arcnorthland.org
ARC MN	(651) 523-0823 (800) 582-5256	770 Transfer Road, Suite 26, St. Paul, MN 55114 www.thearcofminnesota.org mail@arcmn.org
ARC Greater Twin Cities	(952) 920-0855	2446 University Ave W, Suite 110, St. Paul, MN 55114 www.arcgreatertwincities.org info@arcgreatertwincities.org
Disability Law Center/Legal Aid Society	(612) 332-1441	430 1 st Ave North, Minneapolis, MN 55401 www.mndlc.org website@mylegalaid.org
MN DHS Department of Licensing	(651) 431-6500	444 Lafayette Road, St. Paul, MN 55115 www.mn.gov/dhs/general-public/licensing/ dhs.info@state.mn.us
MN Office of the Ombudsman for MH/DD	(651) 757-1800 (800) 657-3506	121 7 th Place East, Suite 420, Metro Square Building, St. Paul, MN 55101 www.ombudmhdd.state.mn.us ombudsman.mhdd@state.mn.us
MN Office of the Ombudsman for Long-Term Care	(651) 431-2555 (800) 657-3591	P.O. Box 64971, St. Paul, MN 55164 www.dhs.state.mn.us/main dhs.info@state.mn.us
Local County Social Service Agency: ask for either child protection or adult protection dependent upon the age of the person	Individual telephone number per county: See *	Individual addresses per county: See * Telephone book www.yellowpages.com https://edocs.dhs.state.mn.us/lfservlet/Public/DHS-0005-ENG

MN Area on Aging:

	MN Area on Aging	Telephone Numbers	Address and Email Address: http://mn4a.org/aaas/
1.	Arrowhead Area Agency on Aging	Main: 218-722-5545 Toll Free: 1-800-232-0707 Fax: 218-529-7592	221 West 1st Street Duluth, Minnesota 55802 Serves: Aitkin, Carlton, Cook, Itasca, Koochiching, Lake & St. Louis counties.
2.	Central MN Council on Aging	Main: 320-253-9349 Fax: 320-253-9576	1301 W St. Germain Street, SE St. Cloud, Minnesota 56301-3456 Serves: Benton, Cass, Chisago, Crow Wing, Isanti, Kanabec, Mille Lacs, Morrison, Pine, Sherburne, Stearns, Todd, Wadena, & Wright counties.
3.	Land of the Dancing Sky Area Agency on Aging	Main: 218-745-6733	109 South Minnesota Street Warren, Minnesota 56762 Serves: Becker, Beltrami, Clay, Clearwater, Douglas, Grant, Hubbard, Kittson, Lake of the Woods, Mahnomen, Marshall, Norman, Otter Tail, Pennington, Polk, Pope, Red Lake, Roseau, Stevens, Traverse & Wilkin.
4.	Metropolitan Area Agency on Aging	Main: 651-641-8612 Fax: 651-641-8618	2365 N McKnight Road, Suite 3 North St. Paul, Minnesota 55109 Serves: Anoka, Carver, Dakota, Hennepin, Ramsey, Scott, & Washington counties
5.	MN Chippewa Tribe Area Agency on Aging	Main: 218-335-8586 Toll Free: 1-888-231-7886 Fax: 218-335-8080	PO Box 27 Cass Lake, Minnesota 56633 Serves: Bois Forte, Grand Portage, Leech Lake, & White Earth reservations
6.	MN River Area Agency on Aging	Mankato Office: Main: 507-389-8879 Fax: 507-387-7105 Slayton Office: Main: 507-836-8547 Fax: 507-836-8866	<i>Mankato Office</i> 10 Civic Center Plaza, Suite 3 PO Box 3323 Mankato MN 56002-3323 <i>Slayton Office</i> 2401 Broadway Avenue, Suite 2 Slayton, MN 56172-114 Serves: Big Stone, Blue Earth, Brown, Chippewa, Cottonwood, Faribault, Jackson, Kandiyohi, Lac Qui Parle, Le Sueur, Lincoln, Lyon, Martin, McLeod, Meeker, Murray, Nicollet, Nobles, Pipestone, Redwood, Renville, Rock, Sibley, Swift, Waseca, Watonwan, & Yellow Medicine counties.
7.	Southeastern MN Area Agency on Aging	Main: 507-288-6944 Fax: 507-288-4823	421 SW First Avenue, Room 201 Rochester, Minnesota 55902 Serves: Dodge, Fillmore, Freeborn, Goodhue, Houston, Mower, Olmsted, Rice, Steele, Wabasha, & Winona counties