

## 4.

# Protection of Rights and Privacy of Persons Served

## B. Grievance Policy

### 1. Policy

A grievance is defined as a complaint that someone receiving services or their expanded support team may make about unsatisfactory service received.

It is the policy of this Department of Human Services (DHS) licensed provider, Meridian Services, Incorporated to ensure that people served by this program have the right to respectful and responsive services. We are committed to providing a simple complaint process for the people served in our program and their authorized or legal representatives to bring grievances forward and have them resolved in a timely manner.

### 2. Procedures

Those receiving services and/or their expanded support team should feel free to file a grievance/complaint without being afraid of losing services or any other negative consequences. If those receiving services and/or the expanded support team have a grievance, they may first fill out the "Person Served Complaint Form" or contact a member of the Chain of Command.

a. **Service Initiation:** A person receiving services and their case manager will be notified of this policy, and provided a copy, within five working days of service initiation.

b. **How to File a Grievance:**

1. The person receiving services or person's authorized or legal representative:

a. Should talk your staff, Program Manager and/or Program Director with whom they feel comfortable about their complaint or problem;

b. Clearly inform your staff, Program Manager and/or or Program Director that they are filing a formal grievance and not just an informal complaint or problem; and

- c. May request the staff, Program Manager and/or Program Director assistance in filing a grievance.
2. If the person or person's authorized or legal representative does not believe that their grievance has been resolved they may bring the complaint to the Program Administrator:
3. If the person or person's authorized or legal representative does not believe that their grievance has been resolved they may bring the complaint to the Chief Operating Officer:

Cheryl Vennerstrom Chief Operating Officer  
9400 Golden Valley Road, Golden Valley, Minnesota 55427  
  
763-450-5007

4. If the person or person's authorized or legal representative does not believe that their grievance has been resolved they may bring the complaint to the highest level of authority in this program:

Rebecca Thomley, Chief Executive Officer  
9400 Golden Valley Road, Golden Valley, Minnesota 55427  
  
763-450-5045

c. Response by the Program

1. Upon request, the Program Manager and/Program Director will provide assistance with the complaint process to the service recipient and their authorized representative. This assistance will include:
  - a. The name, address, and telephone number of outside agencies to assist the person; and
  - b. Responding to the complaint in such a manner that the service recipient or authorized representative's concerns are resolved.
2. Meridian Services, Incorporated will respond promptly to grievances that affect the health and safety of service recipients.
3. All other complaints will be responded to within fourteen (14) calendar days of the receipt of the complaint.

4. All complaints will be resolved within thirty (30) calendar days of the receipt.
5. If the complaint is not resolved within thirty (30) calendar days, Meridian Services, Incorporated will document the reason for the delay and a plan for resolution.
6. Once a complaint is received, Meridian Services, Incorporated is required to complete a complaint review. The complaint review will be completed by the Quality Assurance Administrator. The complaint review will include an evaluation of whether:
  - a. Related policy and procedures were followed;
  - b. Related policy and procedures were adequate;
  - c. There is a need for additional staff training;
  - d. The complaint is similar to past complaints with the persons, staff, or services involved; and,
  - e. There is a need for corrective action by the license holder to protect the health and safety of persons receiving services.
7. Based on this review, Meridian Services, Incorporated must develop, document, and implement a corrective action plan designed to correct current lapses and prevent future lapses in performance by staff or the license holder, if any.
8. Meridian Services, Incorporated will provide a written summary of the complaint and a notice of the complaint resolution to the person and case manager that:
  - a. Identifies the nature of the complaint and the date it was received;
  - b. Includes the results of the complaint review; and
  - c. Identifies the complaint resolution, including any corrective action.
- d. The complaint summary and resolution notice must be maintained in the person's record.

- e. This is the person receiving services grievance procedure. The person may choose to represent him or herself during a grievance or may have someone else do it, such as family, Case Manager, or their legal representative. The person receiving services or someone he/she authorize may also seek mediation from Meridian Services, Incorporated's Quality Assurance representative (763-450-7915) at any time if you have a problem, concern, or grievance.

If the person receiving services want to file a grievance with a state, local, or advocacy agencies he/she can call, email, or ask for assistance in calling to make a formal complaint. When the person receiving services call, he/she can say that you are filing a formal complaint against Meridian Services, Incorporated and would like some assistance.

- 3. State, County, and Local Advocacy Agencies: These are the people the person receiving services or someone he/she authorize can call for help:

- a. ARC Anoka/Ramsey  
2446 University Avenue West  
Suite 110  
Saint Paul, Minnesota 55114  
763-783-4958  
Ask for information & assistance  
[www.arcgreatertwincities.org](http://www.arcgreatertwincities.org)
- b. ARC Minnesota  
800 Transfer Road  
Suite 7A  
Saint Paul, Minnesota 55114  
612-827-5641  
1-800-582-5256 (toll free)  
[www.arcmn.org](http://www.arcmn.org)
- c. Department of Human Services  
444 Lafayette Road  
Saint Paul, Minnesota 55155  
651-431-2000  
[www.dhs.state.mn.us](http://www.dhs.state.mn.us)
- d. Disability Law Center  
430 1st Avenue North  
Suite 300  
Minneapolis, Minnesota 55401  
612-332-1441 (to get a lawyer)  
[www.mylegalaid.org](http://www.mylegalaid.org)
- e. Ombudsman's Office for MR/MI  
121 7<sup>th</sup> Place East 420  
Metro Square Building  
Saint Paul, Minnesota 55101  
651-757-1800 1-800-657-3506  
MN Relay Service 711  
[www.ombudmhdd@state.mn.us](mailto:www.ombudmhdd@state.mn.us)