

Complaint & Grievance Resolution

Options to work towards resolution

Informal Resolution • Formal Grievance Investigation • Appeal Process • Discrimination Complaints

The following information describes the process to be used in resolving problems or concerns you have with the treatment or services provided to you by OceanHawk Counseling Alternatives, LLC (OCA). You can use any or all of these options to address your concerns.

You may file your complaint/grievance verbally or in writing. Forms are available through the clinic's Client Rights Specialist (CRS) or from program reception staff. If you want help in completing forms or putting your grievance in writing, contact the CRS at the address/phone given below.

You are not required to seek informal resolution before filing a formal complaint/grievance. You may choose to involve an advocate in any OCA resolution process. No one may threaten, harass or penalize you in any way for filing a complaint/grievance. You may also seek outside legal counsel.

The OCA Client Rights Specialist (CRS) is: Maria Hanson, P.O. Box 14533, Madison, WI 53708

1. Informal Resolution Process within Agency

- We encourage you to share your complaints, disagreements or concerns about your OCA treatment/services with any staff or supervisor. You may also contact the clinic's CRS, who is available to work with you and/or other staff involved toward resolving the complaint.
- This informal resolution process may involve the use of discussion, listening sessions, mediation etc., to try to reach a satisfactory conclusion. At any time during the informal resolution process, you may decide to file a formal complaint.

2. Formal Resolution Process within Agency

- Formal grievances must be filed, verbally or in writing, with the clinic's CRS. By law, there are time limits placed on filing a grievance. However, there are circumstances under which these timelines can be extended, and the CRS can help you determine the time limits that apply to your particular grievance.
- Grievances having to do with the treatment or services you received at OCA or with your belief that your treatment rights have been violated should be filed within 45 days of the time you became aware of the problem.
- Grievances related to discrimination must be filed within 180 days of the event or treatment you believe was discriminatory (see last section).

In filing a formal grievance with the Client Right Specialist: The CRS will want to talk with you directly to make sure s/he understands your grievance.

The CRS will investigate your grievance, which may include interviews of staff and/or others involved and a review of your clinical treatment records.

- ✚ At any time during a formal level review, you may decide to use or return to an informal resolution process.
- ✚ Unless the grievance is resolved informally, or you have agreed to an extended period of time, you will receive a written report of the CRS's findings and decisions within 30 days from the time you filed the formal grievance. This will include an accounting of any specific actions that will be taken to resolve your grievance.
- ✚ Any written documents received or created as part of the complaint/grievance process will be kept in a confidential file maintained by the CRS. These documents will not become part of your clinical record at OCA.

3. County/State Appeal

- ✚ You have a right to appeal any decision made by the CRS in resolution of a formal grievance filed with the OCA.
- ✚ Within 14 days of receiving the CRS's report or within 14 days of receiving the final decision prepared by the OCA Director of Operations, you may file an appeal with the County by contacting Dane County Department of Human Services at (608) 242-6477.
- ✚ If you are not satisfied with a decision you received as a result of filing an appeal with the County, you have 14 days to file an appeal with the State's Grievance Examiner at PO Box 7851, Madison, WI 53707-7851 or 608-266-2000 (TTY 608-266-7376).
- ✚ A final state review may be requested within 14 days of receiving a written decision from the State Grievance Examiner by contacting the Division of Supportive Living (DSL) Administrator, PO Box 7851, Madison, WI 53707-7851.
- ✚ Wisconsin Client Rights website: <http://dhfs.wisconsin.gov/clientrights>

4. State/Federal Discrimination Complaint

- ✚ If you believe that you were wrongfully denied service or that the treatment you received was separate or different from others because of your race, color, ethnic background, gender, sexual orientation, age, religious preference, disability or other basis protected by statute, the law provides you with options for filing a formal discrimination complaint in addition to or in place of the options listed above. Even if you have used the options above, you can still file a formal complaint with one of the following state or federal agencies as long as you do so within 180 days of the treatment or event you feel was discriminatory.

Resources:

Civil Rights Compliance Officer, WI Dept. of Health Services, Office of Affirmative Action/Civil Rights, PO Box 7850, Madison, WI 53707 – Phone (608) 266-9372 – Fax (608) 267-2147

Website: <http://www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/civilrights/index.htm>

Office of Civil Rights, Region V, US Dept. of Health & Human Services, 233 N. Michigan Avenue, Suite 240, Chicago, IL 60601 – Phone (312) 886-2359 – TDD (312) 886-5693

Website: <http://www.hhs.gov/ocr/civilrights/complaints/index.html>

For complaints of discrimination based on disability— U.S. Department of Justice, 950 Pennsylvania Avenue NW, Civil Rights Division, Disability Rights Section – NYA, Washington, D.C. 20530 Phone (800) 514-0301 – TTY (800) 514-0383 – Website: <http://www.ada.gov>