

POLICY

In the Adult System of Care (ASOC), clients are informed of their rights upon admission. If clients believe they have been treated unfairly, discharged from a program unjustly, or had their confidentiality breached, they may lodge a complaint or file a grievance at three different levels: the provider site, the County Client Rights Panel or the State Alcohol and Drug Department (ADP).

The Patient's Rights Panel are volunteer clinicians from the DADS ASOC. They receive training and supervision regarding their duties. Sites are asked to fully cooperate with a Patient's Rights Advocate when they are investigating a complaint.

PROCEDURE

All Providers

Each provider creates its own Client Rights Document and Grievance Process, posts it where clients will see it at their facility, includes it in the admission packet, and explains it again any time a client is negatively discharged. The Client Rights Document and Grievance Process should include information about all three levels of appeal.

If a client believes that they were unfairly discharged from a program, or believe their confidentiality has been breached, or believes they have been treated unfairly at a provider site, providers should assist the client in following the procedure described below.

Step One: A client is encouraged to lodge their complaint or file a grievance at the provider site first. (However, this is not required.)

Step Two: If the client is not satisfied with the results of the grievance at the provider site, the client can file a grievance with the Santa Clara County Department of Alcohol and Drug Services (**DADS**) **Client's Rights Advocacy Panel**.

1. All Grievance Forms throughout the Adult System of Care will reflect the DADS main administrative phone number, (408) 792-5680, as the number to call if you have a complaint.
2. When calls come to DADS Administration, the Receptionist will determine if client is calling about an outpatient, residential or methadone program and email the first available person on the panel for that modality. The email is sent out with "read/receipt" function activated.
3. When clients begin to tell DADS Admin. Receptionist about their problems with how they were treated or about their termination, etc., the Receptionist will immediately inform client that s/he is not the Patient Rights Advocate but will have that person make contact as soon as possible. If there is no contact number and the client is in treatment, we can call them back through the treatment provider.

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4. If Receptionist does not get a “receipt confirmation” back within 24 hrs, s/he will make one more attempt to contact the panel person. If there is still no response, the next person on the panel listing will be contacted.
5. Advocates will notify the Receptionist via email if not appropriate for them to take the referral, e.g., if the client is at their agency. They will also notify the Receptionist when they are going to be on vacation, out of the office, etc.
6. When a patient rights case is closed, the advocate will bring the chart to the Clinical Standards Coordinator to file. Cases will be kept in a locked file drawer on the third floor in DADS Administration.
7. There will be a total of 4-5 Outpatient and Residential advocates and 3 methadone advocates.
8. If there are any problems, completing the referral of a Client Rights complaint, the DADS Advocate will seek assistance from the Clinical Standards Coordinator.

Step Three: Finally, if the client is not satisfied with the results of the grievance through DADS, the client can file a grievance with the State Alcohol and Drug Programs (ADP) office. The information is:

State of California
Department of Alcohol and Drug Programs
1700 K Street
Sacramento, California 95814-4037
For Methadone: (916) 322-6682
For all others: (916) 322-2911