Service Standards

Service Standards and Other Violations Complaint Process

All clients, employees, or consumers of an Iowa Attorney General's grantee may file a complaint regarding a potential violation of a victim service program's service standards, contractual stipulation and/or certified assurances by completing the **online service standards complaint form.**

Within one week of receiving a written complaint, the grant administrator or the grant coordinator assigned to the victim service program with whom the complaint is about, will notify the complainant and individual or organizations noted in the complaint, and provide them with:

1. A copy of the complaint
2. A copy of the process that will be followed
3. The Victim Assistance contact person's name (each party will have one contact person assigned to them)

Staff will also forward a copy of the complaint to the Victim Assistance section chief.

The grant administrator or grant coordinator will contact the complainant, obtain additional information if needed, and forward a blank release of information form. The grant coordinator will also contact the organization named in the complaint. The grant coordinator will obtain releases signed by the complainant in order to obtain case notes, emails, text messages or any other documentation from the organization necessary to investigate the complaint.

Once the investigation has been completed, a Victim Assistance review team (generally the grant coordinator, grant administrator and the section chief) will determine if the complaint is a violation of the victim service program service standards, contractual agreement and/or certified assurances. If a complaint does not concern a violation of victim service program standards, contractual agreement and/or certified assurance, the review committee will refer the complaint back to the victim service program or complainant to resolve.

If review team determines the complaint is alleging a violation of service standards, contractual agreement and/or certified assurances, it will gather additional information. The review team may request information from any party to the complaint including the complainant; the person(s) or organization being complained about; the board of the victim service program involved; or any other person or organization with knowledge about the circumstances of the complaint. All attempts will be made to gather this information within 60 days of receipt of the complaint.

If, during the information-gathering phase, one party requests the opportunity to address the review team in person and it is granted, all parties will be offered the chance to talk with the committee individually.

After the information is gathered, the review team will formulate the results of their review, including suggested recommendations to the victim service program if it was determined there was a violation of the

program service standards, contractual agreement and/or certified assurance.

The grant team will share the results of review team's investigation with both the complainant and the individual or organization the complaint was about. If there are no findings, or recommendations for additional actions, the complaint will be closed.

If there are findings or recommended actions, both the complainant and the individual, or organization the complaint was about will be notified. The individual or organization will be given a corrective action plan with specific instructions and deadlines to remedy the violations(s). Corrective action plans could include attendance at specialized training or technical assistance or changes to organizational policies or procedures.

The grant coordinator will monitor the individual or organization for compliance with the corrective action plan and advise the grant administrator and the section chief of the progress to complete the plan. The section chief will determine what actions are to be imposed for noncompliance. Additional actions (sanctions) could include implementing additional corrective actions, temporarily withholding claim reimbursements, disallowing funding (including match) for noncompliant activities, returning grant funds, contract termination, or other remedies legally available.

All information gathered in the complaint process will be kept confidential, other than notifying the complainant of the review team's determination. If sanctions are imposed, the content of the sanction can be made available to the public.

The grant team may take immediate action if they believe actions described in the complaint will result in harm to survivors.

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