



Encore Creativity for Older Adults Grievance Policy for Encore Program Participants

PURPOSE:

To outline the procedure by which Encore program participants may express a complaint and the process Encore will follow to resolve the complaint.

POLICY:

It is Encore's policy that all program participants have the means to file complaints and reach resolution. The conditions for expressing a grievance are defined as dissatisfaction with decisions concerning the program participant and/or services provided to the program participant.

Program participants have the right to file a complaint or grievance without interference or fear of retaliation. All staff members are to be attentive and respectful to any grievance registered by a program participant and are prohibited from discouraging, intimidating, or seeking retribution against program participants who seek to exercise their rights or file a complaint or grievance.

Program participants have the right to timely notification of the resolution and receive an explanation of any further appeal, rights, or recourse.

All program participants have the right to at least one level of review that does not involve the person about whom the complaint has been made or the person who made the decision under review.

GLOSSARY OF TERMS

- **Program participants:** Individuals who use, receive, or benefit from Encore's programs and services. Program participants can include participants' spouses or legal guardians.
- **Complaint:** For program participants, a complaint is a verbal expression of dissatisfaction with, including, but not limited to aspects of service delivery, manner of treatment, outcomes, or experiences.
- **Grievance:** For program participants, grievances are formal expressions of dissatisfaction or discomfort that can include, but is not limited to service delivery, manner of treatment, outcomes, or experiences. All complaints received in writing, including email, are considered formal grievances. If a program participant does not wish to or is unable to submit a written expression of dissatisfaction, he or she may request the formal grievance be documented by the staff person receiving the verbal report.

GENERAL PROCEDURES:

1. This policy is posted on Encore's website, accessible to all program participants.
2. At the initial assessment, all program participants will be informed of their right to make a complaint, the process by which to do so, and the way in which the organization will respond. The program participant and Encore staff member will sign and date an acknowledgement form which will be maintained in the program participant's case file and a copy will be given to the program participant.
3. In general, the first step to resolving any program participant concern or complaint should be to seek informal resolution within the program when a dispute arises. This process may begin with the program participant's Conductor or Chorale Master. If a satisfactory resolution is not achieved at this level, staff should inform the program participant of his/her right to submit a formal grievance.

- a. Informal efforts to resolve complaints and grievances should be documented in a newly created case record, progress notes, and/or tracking logs as applicable.
 - b. If the program participant believes for any reason that they cannot approach program staff with their concerns, they may address their concerns directly with the Executive Director or Artistic Director
4. At the time of a complaint, the program participant will be provided by staff an additional copy of the program participant grievance policy. The staff member will review the procedure and clarify any issues for the program participant. Encore will acknowledge and document the receipt of all formal grievances.
5. Formal grievances should be submitted to the Executive Director (ED) or Artistic Director (AD) for review. In cases where the grievance is against either the ED or the AD, the grievance should be submitted to the Board President.
6. The receiving individual (ED/AD) should interview the program participant to discuss his/her concerns directly. The receiving individual will document in writing any communication regarding the grievance.
7. The validity of the grievance will be determined within fourteen business days and the outcome conveyed to the program participant within twenty-four hours of the decision.
8. At this point in time if the program participant remains dissatisfied with the outcome, they may make one final appeal to the President of the Board of Directors. Appeals to the President will be determined within seven business days and the results conveyed to the program participant within twenty-four hours of a decision.
9. Copies of all correspondence regarding the grievance will be submitted to the Board President as documentation of the resolution of the complaint.
10. Results from all written grievances/complaints will be maintained on file at Encore's headquarters offices. Results of any grievance/complaint will be reported to the entire Board of Directors at the subsequent board meeting after resolution of the grievance/complaint.
11. As required, legal counsel may be sought to intervene in situations that are not successfully resolved through the prior avenues. Encore will not in any way restrict, discourage or interfere with program participant communication with an attorney for the purpose of filing a complaint.
12. Should any complaint warrant further investigation beyond the scope of this policy, Encore will communicate with the program participant/family making the complaint in no greater than thirty day intervals.