



Client Grievance Policy

Purpose:

Legal Clinic for the Disabled (“LCD”) strives to treat all clients with respect and to provide all clients with high-quality service. To help ensure that these standards are met, LCD has adopted this Client Grievance Policy. The Policy details the processes for clients to raise any concerns or complaints and for LCD to respond to the same.

Scope:

This Policy governs LCD’s process for handling client grievances regarding the following types of service-related issues:

- a. A decision not to accept an individual as a client;
- b. A decision to end representation of a client;
- c. A level of service that is less than desired or expected by the client;
- d. The quality, manner, or time frame of service provided by a staff member.

Notice:

LCD will provide notice of this grievance policy to clients in the following manners:

- a. Verbally during the client intake;
- b. Reference will be made in the attorney client agreement.

Process:

Submission of a grievance may be made verbally or in writing by a client seeking to have such service-related grievance addressed, and the process once a grievance is submitted is outlined below.

1. A good faith attempt to work out the grievance with the assigned advocate.
 - a. If a client expresses a grievance relating to the services rendered by an LCD staff member, the advocate should document the grievance in the client’s case notes.
 - b. The advocate and the client should discuss the issue and try to work out an amicable solution to address the client’s grievance. The advocate will inform the

client that the client has a right to utilize LCD's grievance policy and will offer to provide the client with a copy of the grievance policy.

2. If the client is not satisfied after discussion with their assigned advocate, the client should contact the Supervising Attorney within the relevant Initiative (MLP/General Intake or Housing). In all communications to file a grievance, the client should provide the preferred telephone number or address where they can be reached.
 - a. The Supervising Attorney should document the grievance, discuss with the advocate, and review the client's file and any other relevant information.
 - b. After such discussion or review, the Supervising Attorney shall speak with the client and respond to their grievance. The Supervising Attorney will respond to the grievance within 48 hours of receipt whenever possible and shall provide a written response to the client.
 - c. All communications regarding the grievance should be fully documented in the client's file. These include internal communications as well as communications with the client. Dates, times, and methods of communication should always be clearly recorded.
3. If the client is not satisfied after discussion with the Supervising Attorney's response and the client's case involves a landlord/tenant or other housing matter, the client should contact the Director of the Housing Initiative. In all communications to file a grievance, the client should provide the preferred telephone number or address where they can be reached.
 - a. The Director of the Housing Initiative should document the grievance, discuss with the Supervising Attorney, and review the client's file and any other relevant information.
 - b. After such discussion or review, the Director of the Housing Initiative shall speak with the client and respond to their grievance. The Director of the Housing Initiative will respond to the grievance within 48 hours of receipt whenever possible and shall provide a written response to the client.
 - c. All communications regarding the grievance should be fully documented in the client's file. These include internal communications as well as communications with the client. Dates, times, and methods of communication should always be clearly recorded.
4. If the client is not satisfied with the Supervising Attorney's response for cases not involving housing-related matters or with the response of the Director of the Housing Initiative for housing-related matters, the client should contact the Legal Director. In all communications to file a grievance, the client should provide the preferred telephone number or address where they can be reached.

- a. The Legal Director should document the grievance, discuss with the advocate, and review the client’s file and any other relevant information. The Legal Director should also review the response(s) of the Supervising Attorney and/or Director of the Housing Initiative.
 - b. After such discussion or review, the Legal Director shall speak with the client and respond to their grievance. The Legal Director will respond to the grievance within 48 hours of receipt whenever possible and shall provide a written response to the client.
 - c. All communications regarding the grievance should be fully documented in the client’s file. These include internal communications as well as communications with the client. Dates, times, and methods of communication should always be clearly recorded.
5. If the client is not satisfied with the Legal Director’s response, the client may submit a grievance to the Executive Director in writing.
- a. “In writing” will include letters, emails, and faxes.
 - b. If a client is unable to submit their request in writing due to their disability, the client shall alert the Legal Director of their intent to continue through the grievance policy process. The Legal Director will work with the client to provide a reasonable accommodation to this policy based on the client’s needs.
 - c. The Executive Director shall review the grievance, the client’s full case file, the Legal Director’s response, and any other relevant documents. The Executive Director will then provide a written response to the client’s grievance within 7 days of receipt.
 - d. The written response should be sent via the client’s preferred method.
 - e. The written response and any further required action will be documented in the client’s file.

Contact:

Contact information for the individuals involved in the Client Grievance Policy:

- Supervising Attorney, MLP and General Intake Initiatives: Emily Jenkins, LCD, 1513 Race Street, Philadelphia, PA 19102; ejenkins@lcdphila.org; 267-587-6357
- Supervising Attorney, Housing Initiative: Peter Valle, LCD, 1513 Race Street, Philadelphia, PA 19102; pvalle@lcdphila.org; 267-403-3226
- Director of the Housing Initiative: Sherry Thomas, LCD, 1513 Race Street, Philadelphia, PA 19102; sherrythomas@lcdphila.org; 215-587-3344
- Legal Director: Theresa Brabson, LCD, 1513 Race Street, Philadelphia, PA 19102; tbrabson@lcdphila.org; 215-587-3357

- Executive Director: Linda Peyton, LCD 1513 Race Street, Philadelphia, PA 19102

Please direct any questions about LCD's Client Grievance Policy to Theresa Brabson, Legal Director: 215-587-3357 or tbrabson@lcdphila.org.