



Parents, Relatives, Kinship Caregivers And Youth in Independent Living: How to solve a problem with Children's Services

If you are involved with Children's Services, you will not always agree with the decisions or actions taken by the agency. If your case is involved with Juvenile Court, you may also not always agree with an action or order made by the Court. This Fact Sheet will tell you how to address problems or disagreements you may have about your case.

If you want to make a complaint about a Court action or order related to your Children's Services case, you must contact your attorney or bring it up at the next Court hearing. Only the Magistrate or Judge on your case has the final authority to change a Court action or order. Examples of Court actions or issues are:

- visitation
- foster placement
- Court-ordered case plan services

If you are an alleged perpetrator and you disagree with the agency's conclusions regarding an allegation of abuse or neglect, you may have a hearing to appeal the disposition (or conclusion). When the investigation is completed, you will receive a letter explaining the worker's disposition regarding the allegation. If you want to appeal the disposition, you must request a hearing within 30 business days of the post-mark on the letter by either calling 946-1313 or sending a written request to:

HCJFS

Attn: Children's Services Hearing Scheduler

222 E. Central Parkway

Cincinnati, OH 45202

If you have a complaint related to an action or decision made by your worker, we encourage you to try and settle the issue with the worker first. Examples of such complaints are:

- Not being treated with courtesy and respect
- Not being given a voice in preparing the case plan
- Not being given clear answers to your questions so you can understand why decisions are made
- Disagreement with the services on the case plan

If you and the worker cannot solve the problem, follow these steps:

Step 1: Talk with the Supervisor

- Call 946-1000 and ask for the name and telephone number of the worker's supervisor.
- Contact the worker's supervisor. You can talk with the supervisor over the phone or ask for a meeting.
- Describe your concerns and tell the supervisor why you're not satisfied.
- Listen and ask questions.
- The supervisor will listen and work with you to solve the problem.
- You may receive a letter from the supervisor. The letter will explain your concerns and what actions the supervisor will or will not take.
- If you are not satisfied with the supervisor's response, take step 2.

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Step 2: Talk or Meet with the Section Manager

- Call 946-1000 and ask for the name and telephone number of the supervisor’s section manager.
- Contact the section manager. The section manager will either talk with you on the phone or schedule a meeting.
- The section manager will listen to your concerns and work to solve the problem.
- The section manager will send you a letter. The letter will list your concerns and what actions the section manager will or will not take.
- If you are not satisfied with the section manager’s response, take step 3.

Step 3: Meet with the Director or Director’s Representative

- Call 946-1000 and ask for the Director’s Office. In an effort to serve you quickly, the Director may appoint a representative.
- The Director/Representative will schedule a meeting.
- You and either the section manager or supervisor will be asked to attend. You’ll be asked to explain your concerns.
- The supervisor/section manager will explain the decisions or actions taken on the case and why they were taken.
- The Director/Representative will listen to everyone’s concerns and work to solve the problem.
- The Director/Representative will send you a letter. The letter will explain your concerns and the actions the agency will or will not take.
- The decision of the Director/Representative is **final**.

Do I have any other options for resolving problems?

Yes. The Ohio Department of Job and Family Services in Columbus makes sure all public children’s services agencies follow state rules. You can contact the Customer Help Line at:

- Ohio Department of Job and Family Services
Toll Free: 1-866-635-3748, Option 2, Extension 3

If you believe you have been a target of discrimination because of age, gender, national origin, race, color, religion or disability, contact:

- Hamilton County Department of Job and Family Services
Consumer Services
(513) 946-2138

OR

- Ohio Department of Job and Family Services
Bureau of Civil Rights
150 East Gay Street, 18th floor
Columbus, Ohio 43215
Toll Free: 1-866-227-6353

OR

- U.S. Department of Health and Human Services,
Office for Civil Rights, Region V
233 North Michigan Ave., Suite 700,
Chicago, Illinois 60601
(312) 353-1640

Communication of This Grievance Procedure to Individuals Who Have Limited English Proficiency or Who Are Hearing or Visually Impaired:

- If you have limited English proficiency, HCJFS will provide a qualified professional interpreter. If you are hearing or visually impaired, HCJFS will make appropriate accommodations to ensure this procedure is reviewed and discussed with you and that your questions are answered to your satisfaction.