



## **Complaint and Grievance Procedure Title III Programs under the Older Americans Act**

The complaint and grievance procedure for Orange County's Title III Programs under the Older Americans Act is designed to provide an opportunity for participants to express their concerns or dissatisfaction with the services and allow for an appropriate resolution of any such complaint or grievance. For grievances filed by non-English speaking participants, a bilingual staff member or volunteer will be available to facilitate the grievance process.

### **1. Complaint Procedure**

A complaint is an oral or written statement of dissatisfaction.

- a. Complaints can be directed to the VP Communications and Operations at the administrative office:

Age Well Senior Services, Inc.  
23101 Lake Center Drive, Suite 325  
Lake Forest, CA 92630

- b. Upon receiving a complaint, the Director or Senior Director (hereafter Director) will assign the complaint to an appropriate staff member for investigation and action. Please address the service to which the complaint is in reference: Meals on Wheels/Case Management/Senior Center Location.
- c. If a solution is found by the Project staff and agreed to by the participant within twenty (20) working days of the complaint arriving at Age Well's administrative office, the complaint is resolved.
- d. If more than 20 days will be required to address the complaint, the Director will advise the participant in writing within 20 days and will provide an estimate of when the complaint will be resolved, not to exceed 45 days from the date when the complaint was received at Age Well's administrative office.
- e. A written summary of the complaint resolution will be sent to the participant (by email or US mail at the discretion of the Director/Department head from which the complaint originated).
- f. The Director may send a written summary to the Department executive for review.

## 2. **Grievance Procedure**

A grievance is any complaint that cannot be resolved to the participant's satisfaction within the complaint system and which has been brought to the grievance level for further action.

- a. A participant may use the grievance process to appeal any unsatisfactory complaint resolution. An appeal must be received in writing by the Department executive or designee within thirty (30) days of the final disposition of the action taken on the complaint by program staff.
- b. The Department executive or designee will acknowledge of receipt of grievance or appeal within fifteen (15) days to all parties concerned.
- c. The Department executive or designee will conduct the necessary investigation and resolve the grievance. When the grievance is resolved, the executive will ensure completeness of the Complaint/Grievance report. The time period for completion of this is forty-five (45) working days from the day the grievance is forwarded to the executive.
- d. A copy of the report will be sent to the participant within seven (7) working days after the 45-day period. The completed report shall contain a resolution to the problem and the basis for the resolution.
- e. If the resolution is unacceptable to the complainant, the complainant must send a response in writing to the Vice President or designee. The Department executive shall then schedule a review of the complaint by a third-party panel of impartial experts and professionals not affiliated with Age Well Senior Services.
- f. If after the review by the third-party panel the complaint has not been resolved, Age Well shall inform the complainant of their right to file a protest of findings with the Office on Aging's Director of Aging.

## 3. **Monitoring Grievances**

Procedures for monitoring grievances are:

- a. Each grievance must be recorded in writing and signed by the complainant.
- b. Age Well Senior Services will maintain a log of all grievances submitted that includes the grievance resolution.
- c. The Department executive will review all complaints and grievances.
- d. The CEO, at his/her discretion, may review complaints and grievances and may allow oral rather than written submissions by the complainant.

- e. All files containing reports of complaints and grievances will be maintained by Age Well Senior Services for a minimum of 5 years.

#### **4. Office on Aging Appeal**

- a. If a participant is dissatisfied with the decision from the grievance process, she/he can contact the Orange County Office on Aging in writing and request that they conduct a "grievance review."
- b. Participants should send their request for a "Grievance Review" to the following address:

Office on Aging  
Director of Aging  
1300 S. Grand, Building B  
Santa Ana, CA 92705

- c. After receiving the written request, the Office on Aging will follow their procedure for making a decision and following up with the participant.

#### **5. Confidentiality of Information**

Names of complainants are confidential and are protected from unauthorized disclosure without specific written approval of the participant or guardian, unless the person is authorized by law to receive it.

Persons representing the news media will not be given any information or leads to the identification of the participant including photographs, unless the participant has given written consent.