



Grievance Policy for Rental and Utility Assistance Programs

Concern with Benefits

Participants accessing Rental Assistance or Utility Assistance services who have a concern about their benefits should first contact their intake specialist to discuss the situation or concern.

Formal Grievances

If the concern cannot be resolved informally, the participant may file a formal grievance with Opportunity Council.

All participants have the right to use the grievance process, without fear of reprisal, to appeal policies, actions, or decisions, and to express serious program-related complaints to Opportunity Council. This process may also be used if a client believes that they have been subject to harassment.

All steps of the grievance process will be handled confidentially to the fullest extent possible. All steps are considered formal and must be documented in writing.

Any participant who has a grievance must report that grievance in writing to the Program Manager listed on the Grievance Form within 10 working days of the incident.

Steps to file a grievance are as follows:

- a. Request Grievance Form from Opportunity Council intake specialist or program staff.
- b. Complete Grievance Form by clearly documenting the complaint including the following:
 - i. Date of incidence
 - ii. Nature of complaint
 - iii. Steps taken to address complaint
 - iv. Staff involved in complaint
 - v. Contact Information
- c. The Grievance Form must be submitted to the agency via email, mail, or drop off as listed on the Form.
- d. If the grievance involves the Program Manager listed on the Grievance Form, then the grievance must be addressed to the Community Services Director of the Opportunity Council.
- e. The Program Manager or Director will consider the grievance, work to resolve it, and provide a written decision to the participant within ten working days. This decision will be final.
- f. **LIHEAP (Energy Assistance) only:** If participant disagrees with Agency decision, a request for Fair Hearing will be extended allowing participant to appeal to Washington State Department of Commerce.