

P-I-22-13 Right to a Grievance or Complaint Developmental Disabilities (DD) Section

Original date: December 1, 2022

Updated March 3, 2026

What is a Grievance or Complaint

People with intellectual or related disabilities who receive developmental disabilities (DD) services funded by Medicaid have the right to file a grievance or complaint.

A grievance is a formal complaint about something that feels unfair, unsafe or not right.

A complaint is when a person tells someone that they are unhappy with a service, situation or how they were treated.

An individual or their legal decision maker may file issues such as:

- Problems with provider staff
- Service delivery
- Quality of services
- Provider performance
- Providers not following Home and Community-Based Services (HCBS) Settings rules

Rights that People have

If a person is receiving services, the provider must ensure that people:

- Live, work and take part in the community in the most inclusive setting
- Have as much choice and control over their lives as possible
- Have their rights respected

These rights include:

- Dignity, privacy and respect
- Freedom from restraints

- Visitors at any time
- Community involvement
- Making their own life choices
- Access to personal money and belongings
- Decorating their home as they wish
- Choosing their daily schedule
- Choice in services, roommates and where they live

How to File a Grievance or Complaint

An individual or legal decision maker may file a grievance or complaint at any time, preferably within 30 days. Filing can be done by phone, mail, email or in person.

Contact Information:

DD Quality Assurance
1237 W Divide Ave Ste 1A
Bismarck, ND 58501
701-328-8930
Toll Free: 800-755-8529
TTY: 711
dhsddreq@nd.gov

What Will Happen

Within ten (10) business days, DD Quality Assurance will:

- Review the grievance or complaint
- Decide what steps are needed to resolve it
- Decide if other agencies need to be involved

Possible steps may include:

- Contacting other agencies
- Investigating the concern
- On-site visits
- Changing licensure status

- Creating an improvement and monitoring plan
- Sharing information
- Fixing or correcting issues
- Revising plans
- Service changes

Other agencies that may be involved include:

- Protection and Advocacy
- Child protection services
- Provider accreditation entities
- Provider agencies
- Regional DD units

Role of the DD Program Manager

DD Program Managers (DDPMs) work in DD offices across the state. They help make sure people get good services by talking with them, observing what is happening, and visiting the places where services are provided. DDPMs monitor:

- Satisfaction with services
- Implementation of the service plan
- Health and safety
- Provider interactions
- People's experiences

If concerns are shared with a DDPM, they will work to resolve them with the person's team, the DD section or Protection and Advocacy.

Notification of Rights

DDPMs must inform individuals and legal decision makers of their right to file a grievance or complaint:

- At the start of services
- At least once each year during service planning
- Whenever a concern is expressed

They also can assist individuals and legal decision makers in filing grievances or complaints. Using this grievance system does not prevent a person from requesting an appeal for issues covered under the fair hearing process.