


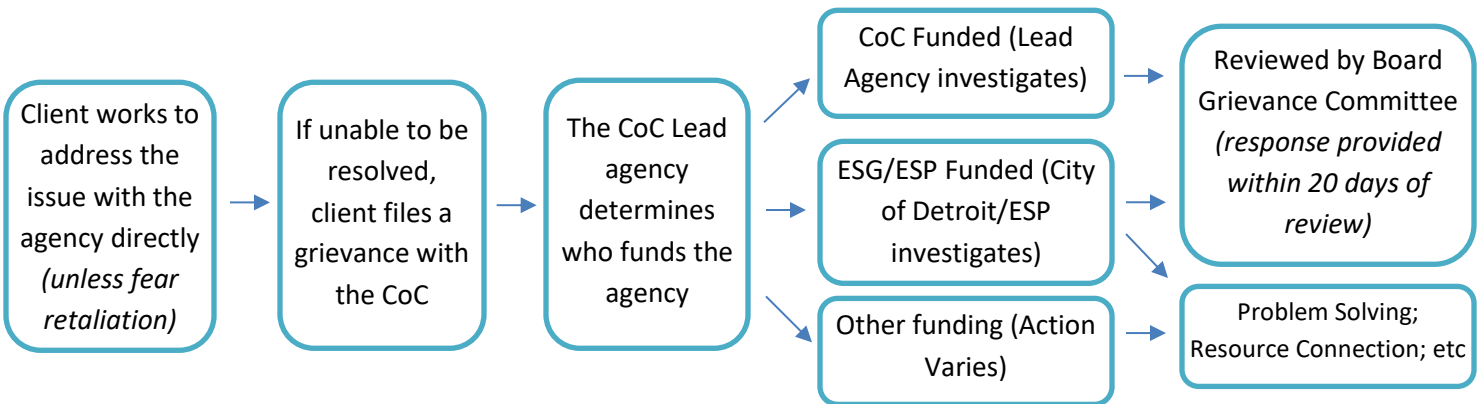
## Detroit Continuum of Care Consumer Grievance Policy

<b>Policy Title</b>	Detroit CoC Consumer Grievance Policy
<b>Date Developed/Revised</b>	November 2017; <span style="color: blue;">November 2019</span>
<b>Most recent Date Adopted by Board</b>	December 2, 2019
<b>Signed by Board Chair</b>	 Amy Brown

**Policy:** All households served by agencies within the Detroit Continuum of Care (CoC) have the right to file a complaint or grievance if they feel their rights have been violated (rights further detailed in addendum A) by any program or agency within the Detroit homeless response system. See Addendum A for more details on client rights.

**Overview:** The Detroit homeless system has a client grievance procedure to ensure that clients' complaints are addressed quickly and fairly. This process is in place for when a client could not resolve a grievance through the agency's formal process. The CoC Lead Agency, Homeless Action Network of Detroit (HAND), receives all claims and determines who funds the agency. HAND conducts an investigation for CoC related grievances. Claims related to shelter programs are investigated by the City of Detroit and/or the Emergency Shelter Program (ESP) Funder. Shelter grievances may also be elevated to the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services (MDHHS) if appropriate. All CoC-funded and ESG-funded grievances are then reviewed by the CoC Board Grievance Review Committee to determine an outcome. Grievance responses are given within 20 days of the Grievance Committee's decision.

**Procedure:** Clients are given a copy of the Grievance Procedure and a Client Grievance Form when the grievance is identified. Staff at Detroit CoC agencies, including Coordinated Assessment Model (CAM) staff, should explain clients' rights to them and how the grievance procedure works. If asked, staff member will help clients complete the form and file the grievance.



1. Client discusses grievance with current service provider and works to resolve the grievance through the agency's formal grievance process. If the grievance is not resolved through the agency's formal process, the client may then pursue a grievance with the CoC. If, however, the client fears retaliation, they can skip this step and file their grievance directly with the CoC (step 2, below).

2. Client completes CoC grievance form (see Addendum C for reference) and submits to CoC Lead Agency (the CAM Liaison at the agency serving the client is responsible for assisting a client with the form if necessary).

3. CoC Lead Agency reviews grievance, attempts to substantiate the claims, and routes grievance to the CoC Board Grievance Review committee. Depending on program's funding source, the CoC Lead Agency may delegate the investigation to the City of Detroit and/or MDHHS to investigate. The CoC may also decline to investigate a grievance if the funding source is not within its jurisdiction. However, efforts to assist with problem solving, resource allocation, and other forms of resolution may be engaged in.

***Note: Non-compliance at any point during the investigation process will result in automatic substantiation of the grievance in question.***

4. The committee then reviews the grievance form and any additional information and works to resolve the grievance with the client. The investigating entity and the Grievance Committee will confer with the CAM Lead Agency, CoC Lead Agency, and other CoC partners as necessary.

5. The Committee facilitator will then provide a written response to the grievance within twenty (20) business days of the review. Copies of the response will be forwarded to the CoC Lead Agency within ten (10) business days, if applicable.

6. If the client is not satisfied with the Grievance Committee's response to the grievance, they will be given the opportunity to file an appeal or request a Case Conference. The Case Conference process is outlined later in the policy in Addendum B. If an agency is not satisfied with the Grievance Committee's response to the grievance, they will be given the opportunity to file an appeal. If an appeal is filed, the CoC Grievance Review Committee will provide a written response to the appeal within twenty (20) business days. Please note, appeals processes for ESP funded agencies may be different than what is outlined in this policy.

7. If the client or agency is not satisfied with results of the case conference or appeal, they can then file a grievance with the appropriate funding body, following the grievance procedure of that body (ie. HUD, MDHHS, etc.).

### **Anti-Retaliation Policy**

The Detroit CoC provides agencies and clients who wish to file a grievance the opportunity to do so without fear of retaliation from the party accused or any representative associated. Retaliation includes, but is not limited to; harassment, intimidation, violence, program dismissal, refusing to provide services, use of profane or derogatory language to or in reference to the complainant, or breach of contract.

The Detroit CoC will take immediate steps to stop retaliation and prevent its recurrence. These steps will include, but are not limited to:

- Providing Technical Assistance
- Placing the agency upon a Corrective Action Plan (CAP)
- Notifying the program funder of both the grievance and the agency's act of retaliation
- Discontinuing CoC Funding (**Decision made at the discretion of the CoC Board**)

The CoC Lead Agency will request supporting documentation from the alleged victim of retaliation to substantiate the claims. Supporting documents may include: police reports, emails, and eye-witness statements.

***Please note: non-compliance with the Grievance Review Committee's efforts to investigate claims of retaliation will result in automatic substantiation.***

# YOUR RIGHTS

## EVERY CLIENT HAS THE RIGHT TO:

### SAFETY

to receive services without fear of harm to your personal well-being

### INFORMATION

to know about the services available, what you can expect and what is expected of you

### PRIVACY

to have a private environment when discussing your personal situation with staff

### CONFIDENTIALITY

to be assured that any personal information will remain confidential unless you have given permission for it to be shared

### CHOICE

to be able to make your own decisions, for staff to explain the impact of your choices on the services you receive and for staff to respect your decisions

### GRIEVANCES

can be made without fear of retaliation

### RESPECT

to be treated with dignity, empathy, courtesy, consideration and attentiveness

### FAIRNESS

to not face discrimination based on race, religion, ethnicity, national origin, sexual orientation, gender identity, age, political beliefs, or disability.

### FAMILIES

are allowed to stay together without requiring proof of relationship; children under 18 should never be separated from their parents, regardless of gender identify

### COPIES OF DOCUMENTS

that you sign or contain your personal information will be provided to you upon request

### ACCESS

to shelter regardless of disability

*If you feel your rights have been violated, please follow the grievance process*

## Addendum B – Case Conference Procedure

### Overview:

The term “case conference” is most frequently utilized in reference to legal proceedings. In this capacity, case conferences are held to assist the two parties to come to a settlement outside of court. The case conference allows the impartial judging body to review the claims each side is making, determine where there is agreement, and to see whether anything other than a trial that can resolve the issues in dispute. In essence, case conferences operate as structured problem-solving sessions. The Detroit CoC has modeled its Case Conference procedure after judicial case conference proceedings.

### Procedure:

1. Prior to the case conference, the client will be given the option to utilize an advocate from the CoC Lead Agency or the Grievance Review Committee to assist with navigating the process.
2. Each party (the client & the agency) is given 10 minutes to share their side of the story to the Grievance Committee and separate from the other party. In this presentation, they are to clearly name their desired resolution for the case conference. This will be timed, and time-signals/warnings will be provided.
  - a. Note: For Case Conferences, the Grievance Review Committee will be made up of the standing committee members and an impartial designee from the Executive Committee. This designee is added to ensure transparency, impartiality, and thorough evaluation of the pending action.
3. At the conclusion of each presentation, a designee from the Grievance Committee will succinctly relay back the main points they have heard the presenter say to ensure they have heard correctly. The presenter will then be given an opportunity to clarify and/or (briefly) add anything that was missed.
4. Also at the conclusion of both presentations, the Grievance Committee will be given 5 minutes to ask any follow-up or clarifying questions. This will also be timed.
5. The Grievance Committee will then be given 10 – 15 minutes to confer internally (separate from the two parties). This discussion will be aimed at the following:
  - a. Identifying and recording areas of overlap/agreement that may be utilized to help build a solution
  - b. Clearly naming and recording the issue(s) in dispute.
    - i. Disputed areas could potentially include: 1 or more elements of the original grievance, the Grievance Committee’s determination, or the follow-up required by the Grievance Committee as a result of their determination.
  - c. Brainstorm any potential solutions/resolutions to the named issues
    - i. This can include solutions which may require one or both of the parties to compromise/make amends.
    - ii. These potential solutions will be used to guide the conversation when the entire group reconvenes
  - d. Name and record any outstanding questions or concerns
  - e. Develop a plan to assist in mediating a resolution between the two parties
6. The entire group will reconvene. This will be the first time that both parties are in the same space together. The Grievance Committee will be given 5 minutes to ask any additional questions that arose in the internal discussion.
  - a. If the Committee feels more internal discussion is necessary after receiving these answers, an abbreviated step 5 can be reapplied.
7. The Grievance Committee will then review the areas of agreement and dispute they have identified with the two parties.
  - a. The parties will be given an opportunity to affirm or amend. This process should take no more than 5 minutes.

8. The Grievance Committee will then discuss the potential resolutions with the two parties. This process is meant to be iterative and to assist in finding a mutual resolution. This may require adapting the original proposal or developing an alternative solution.
  - a. Ideally, this section would not exceed 20 minutes. However, as this is the most important element, it may take longer.
  - b. If agreement is reached, the resolution will be documented and signed by both parties.
  - c. If agreement is unable to be reached, the Grievance Committee will determine if another Case Conference will be held or if the matter will need to be escalated to the appropriate funder for further action.
9. A summary of the case conference will be provided to the two parties within 20 days of the session being held.

**Addendum C – Consumer Grievance Form**

**Detroit Continuum of Care  
Client Complaint/Grievance Form**

*If you have a complaint/grievance that you would like to file regarding the Detroit Continuum of Care and/or a specific provider, please complete the following form. The complaint/grievance will be investigated, and a response will be provided within 20 business days of the committee’s decision. **Please Note: If this grievance is against a shelter, the shelter funder will be contacted to complete the investigation.***

*This form is two-sided. **Please fill out both pages.***

1. Name of Person Making Complaint: \_\_\_\_\_ DOB: \_\_\_\_\_

2. HMIS Number (If available): \_\_\_\_\_

*Please use the space below to provide information about your complaint.*

3. Please list BOTH the agency name **and** the specific program your grievance is against. If you do not know the program name, but know the program type (e.g. Permanent Housing, Shelter, etc.), please list that.

Agency: \_\_\_\_\_ Program: \_\_\_\_\_

4. Date of Complaint: \_\_\_\_\_ Date of event(s): \_\_\_\_\_

5. Have you filed a grievance directly with the agency already? (circle one): YES NO

*Note: If you have not taken action with the agency, please do so before pursuing this process at the CoC Level (unless you fear retaliation). A link to the grievance policy can be found [here](#) or on HAND’s website ([handetroit.org](http://handetroit.org)).*

6. What was the outcome of the action you’ve taken directly with the agency?

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7. What action do you feel the agency should have taken?

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8. **Statement of Complaint** – Please provide details of the situation and complaint including any of the specific dates of occurrence as well as the agencies, programs and/or staff involved. (If more space is needed, please attach another sheet of paper.)

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9. **Desired Resolution/Response** – What would you like to happen as a result of your complaint?

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10. Do you have a case manager or another support person that you would like us to contact? (circle one):  
YES    NO    If yes, name and phone number: \_\_\_\_\_

11. Where are you staying currently? Are you still in the program your grievance is against? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

*Please provide your contact information so that we can follow up with you – in case we have additional questions and to inform you of the final determination.*

- a. Primary Phone Number (if available): \_\_\_\_\_
- b. Secondary Phone Number (if available): \_\_\_\_\_
- c. Email Address (if available): \_\_\_\_\_
- d. Address (if available): \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

12. What is the best method to contact you? (circle):    Phone Call    Text    Email    Other: \_\_\_\_\_

13. May we share this grievance form with the agency your complaint is against? (circle):    YES    NO

**Signature of Person Making Complaint:** \_\_\_\_\_    **Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

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This form can be submitted to the Detroit CoC Coordinator. Submissions may be sent through the following channels:

- a. Email to: [coc\\_coordinator@handetroit.org](mailto:coc_coordinator@handetroit.org)
- b. Fax to: (313)221-8383
- c. Mail to : 3701 Miracles Blvd. Suite 101 Detroit, MI, 48201

**Important Note:** If the complaint is against the CoC Lead Agency, HAND. Please submit the grievance to the CoC Board Chair at [CoCdetroit@gmail.com](mailto:CoCdetroit@gmail.com)