

**I Have a Complaint
Goebel Adult Community Center (GACC)
Senior Nutrition Program**

Grievance Policy and Procedure

The GACC provides meals through the Senior Nutrition Program and encourages you to voice any concern or dissatisfaction with the program or service through the complaint (or grievance) and appeals process. This may include complaints regarding the amount or duration of a service, denial or discontinuance of a service, dissatisfaction with the service being provided, or with our staff.

You, our client, have the right to file a complaint/grievance for any reason **within sixty (60) days from the date the incident or action occurred** which caused you to be dissatisfied.

How to File a Complaint/Grievance

1. You, or any client (complainant) who judges themselves to be aggrieved should submit a verbal or written complaint to the attention of the Supervisor or Coordinator.
 - a. Supervisor/Coordinator: Patty Hamm/Julie Spivack
 - b. Phone Number: 805-381-2744/805-381-2742
 - c. Email: phamm@crpd.org/jspivack@crpd.org
2. If you cannot or don't want to submit a written complaint, GACC staff will verbally accept and document your complaint and email the information below to our Co-Executive Director on your behalf.

All complaints need to include the following information:

- a. The name, mailing address and telephone number, if any, of the complainant or person authorized to act on behalf of the claimant.
- b. The type of service and staff involved.
- c. The names of the individuals involved.
- d. The issue of concern or dispute.
- e. The date, time, and place that the issue of concern or dispute occurred.
- f. The names of witnesses, if any.

Process

1. Once your grievance has been received, the Co-Executive Director will assign staff to conduct an impartial investigation.
2. The Co-Executive Director will log the grievance in the grievance database, which is used for generation, aggregation, and tabulation of grievances. The grievance log records at minimum the following information:
 - a. the date and time the grievance is filed,
 - b. your name or the name of the person filing the grievance on your behalf,
 - c. a description of the grievance,
 - d. type of grievance,
 - e. information regarding physical or language requirements that are relevant to ongoing communication with the client or the client's representative,
 - f. designation if the grievance has a cultural and/or linguistic component,
 - g. designation if the grievance has a disability component.
3. Written acknowledgement of your grievance will be **provided to you within five (5) calendar days of receipt**. This acknowledgement will advise you:
 - a. that the grievance has been received,
 - b. of the date of the receipt,

- c. of the name and telephone number of the person that will be contacting you or your representative.
 - d. of a clear timeframe when the impartial investigation will occur.
4. Staff will investigate the grievance and will consult as needed with other staff responsible for the areas of service that are subject to the grievance. Confidentiality provisions will be made to protect your rights to privacy.
 - a. Only information relevant to the complaint may be released to the responding party without your consent.
5. You have the right to have a representative, advocate and/or lawyer assist in the grievance process.
6. You have the right to language translation during any part of the grievance process. Correspondence is available in English and Spanish.
7. Staff will determine if the grievance involves any cultural or linguistic issues to ensure that the grievance process is accessible and fair for all clients.
8. Staff will identify if there is any disability component to the grievance.
9. You have the right to propose a solution to a grievance.
10. You will be given the opportunity to present evidence, facts, and law in support of your grievance.
11. The Co-Executive Director will review for and document any grievance that has a disability component on the grievance log and in their resolution, as appropriate.

Resolution

1. Complaints will be resolved **within forty-five (45) days of receipt of the grievance**.
2. A written report of the resolution will be sent to you and include the results of the investigation.
3. A copy of the report will be sent to the parties involved. The report shall advise the complainant of his/her right to an appeal to the Ventura County Area Agency on Aging (VCAAA) if dissatisfied with the results of the review.
4. The Co-Executive Director will ensure that any agreements reached during the informal review are fulfilled.
5. The Co-Executive Director will log the results of the grievance process in the grievance database and include at minimum the following information:
 - a. a description of all actions taken to investigate and resolve the grievance and the dates the actions were taken,
 - b. the proposed resolution,
 - c. the date that the client is notified of the proposed resolution,
 - d. a dated record of all client contacts,
 - e. the name of the person responsible for resolving the grievance,
 - f. the date that the issue is resolved.

Appealing the Decision

1. If you are not satisfied with the resolution, you have the right to appeal the decision with the Ventura County Area Agency on Aging (VCAAA) within thirty (30) days of the decision.
2. The request for an appeal shall be made either verbally or in writing to the attention of the Senior Nutrition

Program Manager at VCAAA.

- a. Grants Administrator: Alyssa Corse
- b. Phone Number: (805) 477-7311
- c. Email: alyssa.corse@ventura.org

3. From receipt of an appeal request, Ventura County Area Agency on Aging staff will notify you and/or the other part(y/ies) involved of the following:
 - a. The date, time, and location of the appeal, which will be **held no later than forty- five (45) days from receipt of the request.**
 - b. That you have a right to be represented by any person of your choosing and/or to have another person act on your behalf, including the right to have legal counsel present.
 - c. That all parties have the right to be present at the hearing and present evidence and witnesses.
4. The appeal will be conducted by an impartial staff/panel in an informal manner with testimony being restricted to the issues requiring resolution.
5. **Within thirty (30) days** of the hearing, a written proposed decision will be rendered and sent to you, GACC and the Senior Nutrition Program Manager at VCAAA.
 - a. The decision will include a description of each issue and a statement as to whether the complaint was upheld or denied.
 - b. In the case of complaints that are upheld, an explanation of the remedy for the complaint shall also be included.
6. **No later than thirty (30) days after receipt of the proposed decision**, the Senior Nutrition Program Manager at VCAAA shall either:
 - a. adopt the proposed decision as the final decision or
 - b. write a new final decision that shall be immediately transmitted to the parties involved.
7. This decision will be final and not subject to appeal.
 - a. The decision will include procedures for ensuring that the remedies, if any, specified in the final decision are implemented.
8. Nothing in this process shall be construed as prohibiting you from seeking other available remedies, such as presenting your complaints at an open meeting of VCAAA's Advisory Council.

Definitions

1. **Grievance:** a written or oral expression of dissatisfaction regarding the GACC including quality of service concerns, and may include a complaint, dispute, request for reconsideration or appeal made by a client or the client's representative to the GACC. Where the department is unable to distinguish between a grievance and an inquiry, it shall be considered a grievance.
2. **Complaint:** is the same as "grievance."
3. **Client Appeal:** a request to reconsider an initial denial decision of services or services that were requested but had not yet occurred.
4. **Complainant:** is the same as "grievant," and means the person who filed the Grievance, a representative designated by you, or other individual with authority to act on your behalf.
5. **Resolved:** the grievance has reached a conclusion with respect to your submitted grievance, and there are no pending appeals within GACC grievance system.

