CITY OF LONG BEACH

Department of Health and Human Services
Homeless Services Bureau
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# Grievance and Incident Reporting Policy and Procedures

**Purpose:**
This guidance is created to identify the minimum grievance and incident reporting procedures for the Long Beach Continuum of Care (CoC) and Long Beach Coordinated Entry System (CES). All elements of the following grievance and incident reporting standards must be included as part of the grievance and incident reporting policies and procedures for City of Long Beach Homeless Services Bureau (HSB) subrecipients.

**Definitions:**
Grievance: An official statement of a complaint regarding wrongful or unfair treatment, or violation of rights believed to be unjustified or unwarranted.
Types of grievances may include, but not be limited to some of the following examples: quality of service(s), quality of facilities, program rule violation(s), non-nutritious food, participant favoritism, harassment, discrimination, wrongful termination or exit from the program, assault and battery, theft, etc.
Incident Report: A document used to record details of an unexpected event or occurrence that may have resulted in harm, violence, bodily injury, damage/theft, involvement of emergency personnel/first responders (police, sheriff, fire department, etc.), signs of contagious disease, signs of abuse/neglect, death of participants and/or staff, or any other significant incident. Incidents reports include information such as date, time, location, description of the incident, individuals involved, witnesses, actions taken and any follow-up steps. Incidents are used for documentation, investigation, analysis, and risk management purposes.

**HSB Subrecipient Grievance Policies and Procedures**

- HSB subrecipients must maintain a written set of grievance reporting policies and procedures that are in alignment with the City of Long Beach Homeless Services Bureau CoC and Emergency Solution Grant (ESG) Written Standards
- HSB subrecipients must submit a copy of the aforementioned policies and procedures in compliance with City standards as required by City Requests for Proposals (RFP), CoC Policy, and per the City of Long Beach Homeless Services Bureau CoC and ESG Written Standards.
- Grievances must first be initiated with the subrecipient before submitting to City of Long Beach Homeless Services Bureau. If after the subrecipient has received, reviewed, and attempted to resolve the grievance, and further mitigation is needed, the City of Long Beach Homeless Services Bureau will provide additional guidance and support in ensuring due process. If subrecipient does not provide the opportunity to file a grievance, the participant has the right to contact the City of Long Beach Homeless Services Bureau Homeless Services Bureau via email at hsb-grievances@longbeach.gov.

Subrecipient's grievance policies and procedures must include, but are not limited to, the following:

- The policy will be reviewed with participant(s) during intake and Head of Household will acknowledge receipt. If a participant is unable to sign, subrecipient must document the failure to obtain signature in HMIS;
- Participants will be provided a copy of the termination policy and program rules at intake and notified that copies of these policies and procedures are made freely available upon request;
- Grievance Policies and Procedures must be prominently displayed in the common area(s) of Subrecipient's facility. Public displays must incorporate the City of Long Beach Homeless Services Bureau's Grievance Coordinator contact information – hsb-grievances@longbeach.gov as a mechanism for program participants and staff to contact the system administrator. Any grievances received by the HSB will be verified to have gone through the subrecipients grievance procedures prior to providing support. HSB subrecipients must contact participants within three (3) business days of receiving and confirming receipt of the grievance.
- Subrecipient must include within their grievance policy and procedures, information, and contacts on how to escalate a grievance once the Subrecipient has provided a letter of determination. At a minimum, this includes the City of Long Beach Homeless Services Bureau's Grievance Coordinator's contact- hsb-grievances@longbeach.gov. Grievances can also be filed through the Grievance Portal.

  Documentation of all grievance filing timelines must be entered in HMIS as soon as possible, however, not to exceed three (3) business days from date of event. Documentation should include the following:
  - Date Grievance was Filed
  - Date Grievance was received and by Who
  - Date Participant was Contacted regarding Grievance
  - Grievance Outcome and Date
- CES subrecipients must designate both a primary and alternate person as a point of contact for grievances. This must also include a procedure to support circumstances so that a participant can still be supported if/when the designated or alternative contact is not available to respond in a timely manner.
- To the extent possible and when appropriate, grievance procedures must include a face-to-face meeting with the participant. The grievance investigation must include the gathering of facts, statement(s) from the grievant and/or other participants and staff (if applicable). At the conclusion of the subrecipient's finding, an issuance of a written decision that includes factors and vetted facts that led to the final determination of the grievance, must be given to the client, and documented in HMIS.
- Subrecipient must have procedures outlined for a first and second level grievance appeal and must give the participant the opportunity to present written and/or oral objections before a staff member other than the staff-person (or a subordinate of the person) who made or approved the initial grievance.

- Subrecipient, for both first and second level appeals, must provide a letter, on official agency letterhead, of determination to the participant that consist of facts that led to the decision not to exceed ten (10) business days of receipt of the appeal. The final decision should contain a clear statement of the outcomes that led to the decision of the appeal.

The confidentiality of the participant and their grievance must be ensured. This includes client interaction, settings, and documentation. Grievances should not be uploaded into HMIS or stored outside of the participant(s) file and/or subrecipient's centralized organization system. A centralized and organized system of documenting grievances including a copy or description of the grievance, date the Subrecipient confirmed receipt of the grievance, the staff that addressed the grievance, the date the Subrecipient met with the participant, and the date the participant received the written determination.
Documentation must be made available to City of Long Beach Homeless Services Bureau, along with the participant chart/case file, upon City of Long Beach Homeless Services Bureau's request. The subrecipient's failure to provide such documentation within five (5) business days of the request may result in a material breach of the subrecipients contract.

**City of Long Beach Homeless Services Bureau Review Process**:
The City of Long Beach Homeless Services Bureau reserves the right to review all grievances and appeals. The City of Long Beach Homeless Services Bureau's review process is intended to ensure that the right to due process is being upheld for program participants, and the agency is in compliance with its own policies and procedures, as well as all grievance requirements as determined by contract, regulation, and/or statute. During the time of the review process, the following, but not limited to, actions will take place:

- The City of Long Beach Homeless Services Bureau's Grievance Coordinator will review all documents and investigate the claim;
- Subrecipient's contract and policies will be reviewed;
- Documentation in HMIS will be reviewed and recorded

In addition to the above actions, depending on circumstances, site visits, program satisfaction surveys, and/or interviews may be conducted.
Once a determination has been reached, the participant and subrecipient will receive a letter of determination from the City of Long Beach Homeless Services Bureau with recommended resolutions and/or findings.
If compliance issues or findings are identified, a meeting with the subrecipient and the City of Long Beach Homeless Services Bureau will be set to review procedures and protocols and to develop provider engagement, technical assistance, and/or corrective action plans as deemed necessary.
If the grievance process is not carried out in compliance with the CoC and ESG Written Standards, any participant already removed from the program shall be granted the right to resume their participation in the program. If the program operator is unable to provide the original site, the program operator shall facilitate a placement for the participant in an alternative program.

Grievances received by the HSB that originate at a site the HSB conducts business with, but is not the primary funder of, will be reviewed and participants will be provided assistance with facilitation to the appropriate resource.

**HSB Subrecipient Incident Policy and Procedures**

- HSB subrecipients must maintain a written set of Incident Reporting Policies and Procedures that comply with the City of Long Beach Homeless Services Bureau requirements.
- HSB subrecipients must submit a copy of the aforementioned policies and procedures as required by the Request for Proposal (RFP) agreement for review and approval to ensure compliance with the City of Long Beach Homeless Services Bureau CoC and ESG Written Standards.
- HSB subrecipients shall have written policies and procedures to guide staff actions and program services regarding injury and disease prevention within their programs.

- If applicable, HSB subrecipients are to provide the name and title of the individual designated by HSB subrecipients to handle all Incidents. HSB subrecipients must clearly indicate how this individual can be contacted.

- HSB subrecipients must notify the City of Long Beach Homeless Services Bureau within twenty four (24) hours of any incident that results in severe bodily injury, acts of violence, signs of contagious disease, signs of abuse/neglect, death of participants and/or staff, damage to facility or property by participants and/or staff, dispatch of emergency personnel/first responders (police, sheriff, fire department, etc.).

- Documentation of an incident involving a participant must be entered in HMIS as soon as possible, however, not to exceed one (1) business day. Documentation should only include the date of incident and staff who submitted the report.

- Service Providers are expected to abide by all reporting and timeline requirements of Mandated Reporting for child, elder, and dependent adult abuse. The Service Providers' staff are considered Mandated Reporters of suspected child and senior abuse and must report suspicions of child or senior abuse as required by California Law. The Child Abuse Hotline is (800) 540-4000. The Elder Abuse Hotline is (877) 477-3646. Upon completion of report(s) to Child Abuse and/or Elder Abuse Hotline(s), subrecipient must notify City of Long Beach Homeless Services Bureau within twenty-four (24) hours of the incident.

- The confidentiality of the participant(s) and any related incidents must be ensured. This includes client interaction, settings, and documentation. Incident reports should not be uploaded into HMIS or stored outside of the participant(s) file and/or subrecipient's centralized organization system.

Incidents involving participants or families receiving Domestic Violence Services must ensure the information being disclosed does not compromise the safety of the participant or family. Additionally, HSB subrecipients must comply with the rights and obligations created under the Violence Against Women Reauthorization Act of 2013 and its associated Confidentiality Provision (34 U.S.C. 12291(b)(2)).

All Incident Reports must be submitted to the City of Long Beach Homeless Services Bureau online within twenty four (24) hours of the incident occurrence via the Incident Reporting Portal. Documentation must be made available to City of Long Beach Homeless Services Bureau, along with the participant chart/case file, upon City of Long Beach Homeless Services Bureau's request. Subrecipient/agency failure to provide such documentation within twenty-four (24) hours of the request may result in a material breach of subrecipient's contract.
HSB subrecipient policies and procedures must include a training component for staff that comply with City of Long Beach Homeless Services Bureau requirements. Training agendas and attendance records must be made available to the City of Long Beach Homeless Services Bureau Homeless Services Bureau upon request for review.
Incident Reporting policies and procedures must be provided to staff during onboarding. Staff should sign off on policy to acknowledge receipt. This acknowledgement must be placed in their personnel file.

HSB subrecipients must utilize a centralized and organized system of confidentially documenting incident reports that occur.
HSB subrecipients should provide staff access at all times to the Incident Reporting Portal.

If an incident report and or grievance results in termination of a participant, HSB subrecipients must follow the termination policy as written in the CoC and ESG Written Standards. For further information regarding terminations, please see the termination policy on page XX.
Grievances received by the HSB that originate at a site the HSB conducts business with, but is not the primary funder of, will be reviewed and participants will be provided assistance with facilitation to the appropriate resource.