

As a mental health client, you have the right to receive services from a qualified mental health provider and to take an active part in your care. You also have the right to express your concerns if something goes wrong with your care—for example, your services were terminated or you're dissatisfied with your treatment/medications, or you feel you were treated disrespectfully.

WAYS TO RESOLVE YOUR PROBLEM

If a problem comes up with your services, the easiest and quickest way to resolve things is often to speak directly with your provider or with program management.

If you are dissatisfied with your treatment/medication, you can get a second opinion about

it from another clinician on your provider's staff or through the Access and Crisis Line at **1-800-479-3339**.

You can also use the County Mental Health Grievance and Appeal Process to help solve your service problem by:

- filing a grievance at any time, if you feel your rights are being denied.
- filing an appeal if your services are terminated, reduced or denied.
- asking for a State Fair Hearing, if you have Medi-Cal.

WHAT ARE GRIEVANCES AND APPEALS?

Grievances and appeals are expressions of dissatisfaction with services which can be oral or written.

Appeals are a request for review of any of the following actions:

- denial or limitation of services;
- reduction or stopping of services;
- failure to provide services in a timely manner according Mental Health Plan guidelines.

Grievances are a request for review of any specialty mental health matter other than the actions listed above that you are dissatisfied with—for example, did you feel you were not treated respectfully or not provided with needed language assistance?

HOW CAN I FILE?

- In writing-- Fill in the Grievance and Appeal Form available in every provider's office, take a pre-addressed

envelope and send it in. You will be contacted by one of the County's consumer advocacy agencies.

- Orally—by phone or in person to one of the County's consumer helper agencies.

YOUR RIGHTS IN THE PROCESS

- To be free from discrimination or penalty because of filing the grievance/appeal.
- To have your confidentiality protected, by law.
- To be treated with dignity and respect, in a language you can understand.
- To authorize another person to act on your behalf.
- To have a support person attend meetings with you, as you go through the process.

HELP WITH THE COUNTY PROCESS

The County has contracted with two organizations to help consumers solve their problems with the Mental Health system through using the Grievance and Appeal Process:

Inpatient or 24-hour

Residential Services:

**USD PATIENT ADVOCACY at
1-800-479-2233**

Outpatient and all other services:

**CONSUMER CENTER FOR
HEALTH EDUCATION AND
ADVOCACY (CCEA)
at 1-877-734-3258.**

HOW CAN I REQUEST A STATE FAIR HEARING?

If you are a Medi-Cal client and have a problem with your mental health services, you have the right to request an opportunity

to present your concern to an administrative law judge for a ruling at a State Fair Hearing.

You may file the request for a hearing at any time before or during the County's Appeal Process or up to 90 days after it has been completed, whether or not you received a Notice of Action (NOA). You don't need to use the County's Process to request a Fair Hearing, but you need to file a request within 90 days of having the problem.

You may contact USD Patient Advocacy (Inpatient concerns) or CCEA (Outpatient and all other concerns) for help in requesting a State Fair Hearing or, if you wish, you may call the State Department of Social Services at:

1-800-952-5253

FOR ASSISTANCE WITH GRIEVANCES AND APPEALS about:

**INPATIENT AND 24-HOUR
RESIDENTIAL SERVICES**

**USD PATIENT
ADVOCACY**

1-800-479-2233

**OUTPATIENT AND ALL
OTHER MENTAL HEALTH
SERVICES**

**CONSUMER CENTER
FOR HEALTH**

**EDUCATION AND
ADVOCACY**

1-877-734-3258

COUNTY OF SAN DIEGO
MENTAL HEALTH PLAN



GRIEVANCE AND APPEAL PROCEDURES

A Consumer's Guide