

COMMON STEPS TO FOLLOW WHEN HANDLING COMPLAINTS

Whenever an individual indicates an interest in filing a complaint under this subpart with a Career Center/Career Center sub recipient, DWS staff or an outreach worker, the staff receiving the complaint *must* offer to explain the operation of the Complaint System and *must* offer to take the complaint in writing.

1. During the initial discussion with the complainant, the staff taking the complaint must:
 - a. Explain to the complainant how the Complaint System works;
 - i. Attempt informal resolution, if customer agrees
 - b. Make every effort to obtain all the information perceived to be necessary to investigate the complaint;
 - c. Request that the complainant provide the physical addresses, email, and telephone numbers through which he/she might be contacted during the investigation of the complaint; and
 - d. Request that the complainant contact the complaint specialist before leaving the area (if complainant is a migrant worker) and must explain the need to maintain contact with the complaint specialist during the complaint resolution process.
2. The complaint specialist *must ensure* the complainant (or his/her representative) submits a complaint in writing with a date and signature ((this may include email; electronic signatures are acceptable).
3. Any complaint in a reasonable form (*letter or email*) which is *signed by the complainant*, or his/her representative, and includes sufficient information to initiate an investigation *must be treated* as if it were a properly completed Complaint/Referral Form filed in person.
 - a. A letter (via hard copy or email) confirming the complaint was received *must be sent* to the complainant and the document must be sent to the appropriate complaint specialist for processing
 - b. If, after an initial review, if the complainant has not provided sufficient information to investigate the matter expeditiously, the complaint specialist *must* request additional information from the complainant
4. If the complaint is alleging discrimination, then it must be submitted utilizing the Complaint/Referral Form. See Item 2(B)(i) below for exceptions.
 - a. The *Career Center/sub recipient* staff *must* offer to assist the complainant in filling out the form and submitting all necessary information and *must* do so if the complainant desires such assistance. If the complainant also represents several other complainants, all such complainants *must be named*.
 - b. The complainant, or his/her representative, *must sign* the completed form in writing or electronically.
 - c. A copy of the completed complaint submission *must be* given to the complainant(s), and the complaint form *must be* given to the appropriate complaint specialist for review and resolution.

INFORMAL RESOLUTION PROCESS

At each level, the Informal Resolution process must be used to attempt to resolve One Stop Career Center related complaints, grievances or service-related allegations. Generally, the complaint specialist or his/her back-up will arrange for or facilitate the conciliation meeting(s) between the parties. This process must not exceed 10 days and the complainant may request that the informal resolution process be terminated at any time, in which case the Formal Resolution protocol will be followed. The complaint specialist may, at its discretion, also initiate the Formal Resolution process at any time. Once an Informal Resolution process is complete, both parties will be notified simultaneously of the resolution.