

CUSTOMER CONCERN AND COMPLAINT RESOLUTION

Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act Policies and Procedures

EFFECTIVE DATE: 11.01.2013

POLICY #: S503

I. PURPOSE:

To ensure prompt resolution of all customer concerns, provide minimal expectations for coordination and collaboration among partners, and to define the Workforce Development Council's (WDC) role in oversight of the complaint system. Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) Title I grant funds, service providers and centers within the One Stop System, regarding the processing of discrimination complaints, including the development, maintenance, and implementation of local-level discrimination complaint procedures. All grant recipients/program providers under Title I of WIOA are responsible for complying with the discrimination complaint procedures at [29 CFR Part 38](#), as outlined in this policy and attached [handbook](#).

II. BACKGROUND:

Federal law and regulations require procedures for handling complaints alleging violation of WIOA Title 1, Wagner-Peyser (including TAA) and Non-Discrimination laws. The complexity of these procedures, and the resulting silos, may have prevented partners from assisting all customers who have service delivery or customer service related concerns before they rise to the level of a formal, written complaint. The lack of standard expectations for handling concerns may have limited prompt and informal resolution and may have unnecessarily increased the number of formal, written complaints.

This policy provides standard expectations for processing customer concerns, protect the confidentiality of customers and formal complaints. In so doing, it creates distinct definitions of customer "concern" and customer "complaint." Minimum requirements have been established to create a process for referring complaints to partners located at the WorkSource Center, Affiliates and Connection Sites for additional processing and resolution.

The oversight responsibility of the WDC is also clarified when dealing with complaints from "other interested parties affected by the local Workforce System, including One- Stop partners and service providers" as described in 20 CFR 667.600(c)(1). The state has determined that allegations concerning WorkSource Center, Affiliate and Connection Site partners that do not fall under the defined program and non-discrimination processes described in the attached WorkSource Complaint Handbook shall be processed as concerns.

III. POLICY:

The WDC Local Equal Opportunity (EO) Officer is the designated complaint coordinator and responsible for adopting and publishing local customer concern and complaint resolution policies and procedures, and ensuring they are followed.

In this oversight capacity, the WDC provides the following assurances:

- Adopt and adhere to minimum complaint logging, tracking and processing requirements contained in the attached [WorkSource System Discrimination Complaint Processing Handbook for WIOA Title 1, Wagner- Peyser, TAA and Discrimination](#)
- Complaint contact(s) are identified
- Require informal resolution of customer concerns
- The WorkSource complaint poster is displayed in a visible area where customers most commonly gather, and identifies a local complaint contact(s)
- The WDC Local EO Officer is informed of all local complaints concerning a WorkSource Center, Affiliate or Connection Site, from point of entry to resolution
- Collaborate when complaints present allegations involving multiple partners

Local Customer Concern and Complaint Resolution Responsibility

All WorkSource sites must have a written customer concern and complaint process and shall designate a local complaint contact and a back-up complaint contact to process complaints. The local process shall be consistent with the minimum complaint processing requirements contained in the attached WorkSource Seattle-King County Complaint Handbook for WIOA Title 1, Wagner-Peyser, TAA and Discrimination

Each local WorkSource system partner must understand and agree to the process which shall be attached to the Memorandum of Understanding, so that all partners are aware of the process to be followed for assisting customers interested in expressing a concern or filing a complaint.

Local Initial Customer Concern and Complaint Resolution Responsibility

Under guidance from the Workforce Development Council (WDC), the One-Stop Operator is responsible for ensuring:

- Each WorkSource site has a common initial customer concern and complaint resolution
- process; and
- The WorkSource complaint poster is displayed in a visible area where customers most commonly gather.

Concerns must be processed at the local level prior to any state level intervention. The intent is to enable partners to assist customers at the lowest level possible with prompt and informal resolution of concerns.

Complaint jurisdiction is first determined by area – the Seattle/King County workforce development area (WDA). Secondly, all partners located in the WDA at WorkSource Centers,

Affiliates, Connection Sites or elsewhere are responsible for the outcomes of complaints that fall within their jurisdictional responsibility, which is based on the specific funding stream that supports the function tied to the complaint allegations.

IV. DOCUMENTATION AND JUSTIFICATION:

Complaint – The submission of a written and signed allegation that falls under the jurisdiction of WIOA Title 1, Wagner-Peyser, TAA, and/or Non-Discrimination requirements as noted in the WorkSource Complaint Handbook. The identity of complainants and any persons who furnish information relating to, or assisting in, an investigation of a complaint must be kept confidential to the maximum extent possible, consistent with applicable law and a fair determination of the complaint. At a minimum, complaints must contain the following confidential information:

- Complainant’s name;
- Mailing address, or other means by which the complainant may be contacted;
- Identification of individual(s) or organizations(s) responsible for the alleged issue;
- A description of the complainant’s allegations, which must include enough details to determine the jurisdiction of the complaint and the date(s) the alleged incident(s) took place; and
- The complainant’s signature and signature date. The signature of his/her authorized representative is also acceptable.

Local Complaint Contact – Staff member(s) designated by a WorkSource site administrator responsible for processing program complaints. The WDC Local EO Officer or the State EO Officer may serve as a complaint contact for discrimination complaints. A contact may also be appointed by the WorkSource site administrator that initially assists all customers interested in filing a complaint at the local WorkSource office and determines partner(s) program’s complaint jurisdiction if a complaint is subsequently filed.

Complaint Coordinator – The WDC designated single point(s) of contact for the workforce development area (WDA). The Complaint Coordinator is responsible for adopting and publishing customer concern and complaint resolution policies and procedures and ensuring they are followed, facilitating the initial process and promoting coordination to resolve all complaints.

Concern – Any verbal or written expression of dissatisfaction other than alleged violations of program or non-discrimination rules or laws. Concerns must be resolved informally at the local level but do not require the same formal process as a complaint (i.e., logging, tracking, etc.). If a concern cannot be resolved informally it may be escalated as a complaint at the customer’s discretion. The customer must be informed of the relevant complaint process (per the Handbook) and provided assistance as needed.

V. REFERENCES:

- WorkSource Policy 1012, Initial Customer Complaints
- WIOA Policy 3440 Rev 1, WIOA Complaint Policy
- WIOA Policy 3450 Rev 1, Equal Opportunity and Discrimination Complaint Processing Policy and Procedures
- WIOA Policy 4061, Migrant and Seasonal Farmworker Complaint Policy
- TAA Policy 3075, Complaints Appeal Process
- 29 CFR Part 38
- WorkSource System Discrimination Complaint Processing Handbook