



Workforce
Snohomish

SYSTEM POLICIES

MEMORANDUM #13-05

To: All WorkSource Snohomish County Partners

Subject: Customer Concern and Complaint Resolution

Supersedes: General Program Management Policies and Procedures #01-02 and #01-03, Customer Complaint Resolution #10-08

Effective Date: January 1, 2014

A. BACKGROUND

Workforce Snohomish is issuing this policy in accordance with the Work Source Complaint Handbook – Attachment A, rev. July 29, 2013 (hereafter referred to as the Handbook) *to encourage prompt resolution of all customer concerns, outline minimum expectations for coordination among partners and clarify Workforce Snohomish’s oversight role in the complaint system.* This policy also creates distinct definitions of customer “concern” and customer “complaint”.

B. POLICY

WorkSource Snohomish County partners must engage in immediate and consistent processing of any customer complaint to ensure its resolution. All WorkSource Snohomish County partners must be able to assist customers interested in filing a complaint, which at a minimum, includes directing the individual to the appropriate local complaint contact.

If a customer chooses to file a complaint and the complaint is determined to be within a partner’s jurisdiction, the complaint must be referred to the appropriate complaint contact to ensure compliance with the partner’s authorizing legislation, regulation, and/or state law for the applicable program. For Wagner-Peyser, Trade Act, and WIA funded programs, complaints must be processed in a manner consistent with state policies by the appropriate designees. Discrimination complaints must be referred to the Workforce Snohomish Equal Opportunity Officer or State Equal Opportunity Officer, depending on the program involved. The Handbook will be the guiding document in addition to the steps listed below.

Each WorkSource Snohomish County Site Operator shall:

- Establish at least one complaint coordinator (and a back-up), who is responsible for tracking all local complaints;
- Designate a local system complaint contact and a back-up complaint contact at each full service center and each affiliate site to appropriately route those complaints determined to be within a partner's program jurisdiction to the partner's program complaint contact. All program complaint contacts must be aware of applicable state and local program policies and this policy.
- Ensure that local complaint contacts shall collaborate when complaints present allegations involving multiple partners;
- Ensure informal resolution of customer concerns;
- Ensure that the WorkSource complaint poster is displayed in a visible area where customers most commonly gather.
- Follow the complaint processing requirements contained in the Handbook for WIA Title 1, Wagner-Peyser, TAA, and Discrimination;
- Manage the coordination among local program complaint contacts on complaints that involve multiple allegations, multiple complaint processes, multiple partners, and/or multiple agencies with investigative authority from point of entry to resolution.
- Ensure that all system and program complaint contacts assisting a customer immediately notify a customer alleging a violation of program law or regulations, or discrimination law or regulation, of their right to file a written complaint.
- Ensure that each WorkSource Snohomish County system partner agrees to and follows the Initial Customer Concern and Complaint policy and procedures which shall be attached to the Memorandum of Understanding and incorporated by reference.
- Ensure that each local system complaint contact has received training in the initial customer concern and complaint resolution process, has a working knowledge of partner program complaint contacts, and is able to identify and refer a complaint to the appropriate local program and EO complaint contacts.
- Ensure that each program and EO complaint contact has been trained in the relevant process(es) and filing requirements as well as the timelines for referring and/or resolving complaints and maintain documentation of training participation.
- Ensure that program complaints and discrimination complaints are not processed together but are formally resolved as separate complaints.
- Maintain documentation of all system complaints, copies of all program complaints and associated documents, and all EO complaints referred to the Workforce Snohomish EO Officer or ESD in a central log.

C. COMPLAINT JURISDICTION

All partners located at WorkSource Centers, affiliates or elsewhere are responsible for the outcomes of complaints that fall within their jurisdiction. Determinations of jurisdiction will be made based on the specific funding stream that supports the function tied to the complaint allegations, not based on associations other than funding sources.

C. DEFINITIONS

NOTE: For a complete list of definitions refer to the Handbook.

Complaint – The submission of a written and signed allegation that falls under the jurisdiction of WIA Title 1, Wagner-Peyser, TAA, and/or Non-Discrimination requirements as noted in the Handbook. At a minimum, complaints must contain the following 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.

Complaint Contact – The Program management or staff designated by the Site Operators responsible for processing program complaints. Worksource Snohomish Equal Opportunity officer or the State Equal Opportunity Officer may serve as a complaint contact for discrimination complaints. A contact may also be appointed by the Site Operators that initially assists all customers interested in filing a complaint at a local WorkSource office and determines partner(s) program's complaint jurisdiction if a complaint is subsequently filed.

Complaint Coordinator – The Worksource Snohomish designated single point(s) of contact for the WDA or each WorkSource Center and Affiliate Site. The site's Complaint Coordinator is responsible for facilitating the initial process and promoting coordination to resolve all complaints.

Concern – Any verbal expression of dissatisfaction or any written expression of dissatisfaction other than alleged violations of program or non-discrimination rules or laws. Concerns must be referred but do not require the same formal process as a complaint (i.e., logging, tracking, etc.). Local processes may include additional requirements.

C. REFERENCES

Workforce Snohomish Complaint Handbook – Attachment A, rev. July 29, 2013

<http://www.workforcesnohomish.org/align/policies/documents/system/complainthandbook.pdf>

WorkSource System Policy 1012 Revision 1

<http://www.wa.gov/esd/1stop/policies/documents/systems/1012Rev1ComplaintResolution.pdf>

WIA Policy Number 3445, Revision 1

Equal Opportunity and Nondiscrimination

<http://www.wa.gov/esd/1stop/policies/documents/title1b/3445.htm>