

**San Bernardino County
Department of Behavioral Health**

Patients' Rights Inpatient Grievance Process

Effective Date 02/11/1992
Revision Date 05/13/2016

 CaSonya Thomas, Director

Purpose To provide a process by which inpatient clients of Department of Behavioral Health (DBH) may initiate a grievance if they believe their patient's rights (see [Patient's Right Policy](#)) have been violated.

In accordance with Welfare & Institutions Code, sections 5520 and 5522, the Patients' Rights Office, upon receipt, investigates complaints from or concerning recipients of mental health services in licensed health or community care facilities in San Bernardino County.

Filing a Grievance A grievance may be made via face-to-face report, mail or phone. Clients may complete [Patients' Rights Grievance Form – \(Spanish\)](#) and [Authorization to Release Protected Health Information – \(Spanish\)](#). These forms are available in both English and Spanish. Once a grievance has been received and screened, Patients' Rights will:

- Contact the client via phone and/or
 - Mail acknowledgement letter and Releases of Protected Health Information (PHI) to be completed and returned by the client to the Patients' Rights Office.
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Authorized Representative In most cases, Patients' Rights will not open a grievance based on third party reports. Upon initiation of a grievance, the client may assign an Authorized Representative for the remainder of the grievance process.

Grievance Investigation Patients' Rights will investigate the grievance and will make every effort to keep the client informed of progress during the course of the investigation.

Grievance Resolution Patients' Rights informs clients of the resolution at the conclusion of the investigation verbally and/or in writing.

Timeframe Patient's Rights attempts to resolve grievances within 60 days.

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Patients' Rights Inpatient Grievance Process, Continued

**Unsatisfactory
Resolution**

If a client is unsatisfied with the resolution of the grievance, he/she has the right to appeal to the next level, in ascending order:

- Chief Patients' Rights Advocate
 - DBH Director
 - California Office of Patients' Rights
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References

California Code of Regulations, Title 9, Sections 863.2 and 864
California Welfare & Institutions Code, Sections 5520, 5522, 5325 and
5325.1

**Related
Policies or
Procedures**

DBH Standard Practice Manual:

- COM0946: [Client Grievance Policy](#)
 - COM0935: [Patient's Right Policy](#)
 - COM0935-2: [Patients' Rights Outpatient Grievance Process](#)
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