



2019-2022

GUAM DEPARTMENT OF YOUTH AFFAIRS

METHODS OF ADMINISTRATION

CIVIL RIGHTS COMPLIANCE POLICY

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GUAM DEPARTMENT OF YOUTH AFFAIRS CIVIL RIGHTS COMPLIANCE POLICY

As a recipient of federal financial assistance from the U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ), Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, the Guam Department of Youth Affairs (DYA) is committed, as a matter of principle, and in compliance with applicable federal laws, to prohibiting discrimination and behaviors, which, if repeated, could constitute discrimination. Accordingly, this policy establishes written procedures for 1) individuals to follow in filing an employment or services discrimination complaint with the DYA; and 2) DYA employees to follow when they receive complaints alleging employment or services discrimination from employees, clients, customers, program participants, applicants, or consumers of the DYA or of DYA subgrantees receiving federal financial assistance from DOJ. This policy applies to all employees of the DYA and all of its contractors and subgrantees.

The DYA directs that its transactions and the operation of all DYA-funded subgrantee programs and activities shall not discriminate or retaliate on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin, sex, age, or disability. Harassment on any of the above-stated grounds is a form of prohibited discrimination.

The DYA, its contractors, and its subgrantees have the obligation to comply with the following federal civil rights laws:

- Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, which prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, color, or national origin in the delivery of services (42 U.S.C. § 2000d), and the DOJ implementing regulations at 28 C.F.R. Part 42, Subpart C;
- The Omnibus Crime Control and Safe Streets Act of 1968, which prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, color, national origin, religion, or sex in the delivery of services and employment practices (42 U.S.C. § 3789d(c)(1)), and the DOJ implementing regulations at 28 C.F.R. Part 42, Subpart D;
- Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, which prohibits discrimination on the basis of disability in the delivery of services and employment practices (29 U.S.C. § 794) and the DOJ implementing regulations at 28 C.F.R. Part 42, Subpart G;
- Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, which prohibits discrimination on the basis of disability in the delivery of services and employment practices (42 U.S.C. § 12132) and the DOJ implementing regulations at 28 C.F.R. Part 35;
- Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, which prohibits discrimination on the basis of sex in education programs and activities (20 U.S.C. § 1681), and the DOJ implementing regulations at 28 C.F.R. Part 54;
- The Age Discrimination Act of 1975, which prohibits discrimination on the basis of age in the delivery of services (42 U.S.C. § 6102), and the DOJ implementing regulations at 28 C.F.R. Part 42, Subpart I; and

- The DOJ regulations on the Equal Treatment for Faith-Based Organizations, which prohibit discrimination on the basis of religion in the delivery of services and prohibit organizations from using DOJ federal financial assistance for inherently religious activities (28 C.F.R. Part 38).

DEFINITIONS

A. “A person with a disability” means any person who: (1) has a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more of such person’s major life activities; (2) has a record of such an impairment; or (3) is regarded as having an impairment that is not both transitory and minor.

B. “Complainant” refers to the person or persons initiating the complaint.

C. “Harassment” is a form of behavior that is characterized by conduct: (1) based on race, color, national origin, sex, religion, disability, or age; and (2) if sufficiently severe, persistent, or pervasive, could reasonably be expected to create an intimidating, hostile, or offensive working or learning environment.

D. “Respondent” is the person or persons against whom a complaint has been initiated.

E. “Retaliation” refers to adverse actions taken by an employer or service provider because an individual engaged in a protected activity, such as opposing a discriminatory practice or participating in a discrimination complaint process.

COMPLAINT PROCEDURES

A. Filing a Complaint

A person who believes that s/he has been harassed or been subject to discriminatory treatment within the DYA or by a DYA subgrantee because of race, color, national origin, sex, age, religion, or disability, or has been retaliated against for engaging in protected activity, is urged to file a complaint through the DYA Civil Rights Officer. The current Civil Rights Officers are Richard Mendiola, richard.mendiola@dya.guam.gov, (671)735-5022; Jennifer Arceo, jennifer.arceo@dya.guam.gov, (671)735-5012; or Sollie Onedera, sollie.onedera@dya.guam.gov, (671) 735-5039. Generally, formal complaints must be filed with the Civil Rights Officer within 180 calendar days of the alleged discrimination. If the complaint is not filed on time, the complainant shall provide the reason for the delay and request a waiver of this filing requirement. The DYA shall decide whether to grant the waiver. The complaint may be filed in a letter, in an e-mail, in person, or over the phone. In anticipation of filing a complaint, an individual may find it beneficial to contact the Civil Rights Officer to obtain policy clarification, advice, or assistance.

B. Referral of Complaint to Civil Rights Officer

If an employee of the DYA other than the Civil Rights Officer receives a discrimination complaint from an employee, client, customer, program participant, applicant, or consumer of the DYA or of a DYA subgrantee, s/he shall submit the complaint to the Civil Rights Officer within five (5) business days of receiving the complaint. Furthermore, the DYA shall provide the complainant with a written notice acknowledging receipt of the complaint and explaining that the complaint will be resolved within forty-five (45) calendar days of the DYA's receipt of the complaint.

A DYA subgrantee shall advise the Civil Rights Officer of an employment or services discrimination complaint filed against it within ten (10) business days of receiving the complaint.

C. External Agencies

While the DYA encourages individuals to file any employment or services discrimination complaint with the DYA, the agency's policies and procedures are not intended to impair or limit the rights of anyone to seek a remedy available under state or federal law. As an alternative or in addition to filing a complaint with the DYA, an individual may wish to file a complaint with an external agency for investigation, such as a local or state human rights commission, or an appropriate federal agency. For instance, if a complainant alleges a violation of a federal employment discrimination laws that is enforced by the U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC), the DYA acknowledgement letter will inform the complainant that s/he may file a complaint directly with the EEOC and provide the following contact information:

U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission
Los Angeles District Office
Roybal Federal Building
225 East Temple St., 4th Floor
Los Angeles, CA 90012
Telephone: 1.800.669.4000
TTY: 1.800.669.6820
<http://www.eeoc.gov/field/losangeles/charge.cfm>

If a complainant alleges a violation of a federal civil rights law that is enforced by the Office for Civil Rights (OCR), Office of Justice Programs, DOJ, the DYA acknowledgement letter will inform the complainant that s/he may file a complaint directly with the OCR and provide the following contact information:

Office for Civil Rights
Office of Justice Programs
U.S. Department of Justice
810 7th Street NW
Washington, DC 20531
Telephone: 202.307.0690
TDD/TTY: 202.307.2027
<http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/about/ocr/complaint.htm>

D. Complaint Evaluation, Investigation, and Resolution Proceedings

Evaluation of the Complaint

The DYA evaluates each complaint it receives to determine whether it can investigate the complaint. The DYA makes this determination with respect to each allegation in the complaint. The DYA shall dismiss the complaint if the following is determined:

- The DYA lacks jurisdiction over the complaint;
- The complaint was not filed timely and a waiver will not be granted;
- The complaint is unclear or incomplete and the complainant does not provide the information the DYA requests within twenty (20) calendar days of the request; or
- The allegations raised by the complaint have been resolved.

If a complaint cannot be resolved within sixty (60) calendar days of the DYA's receipt of it or the respondent remains unwilling to negotiate an agreement, the Civil Rights Officer will refer the matter to the EEOC, if the complaint involves employment discrimination, or to the OCR, if the complaint involves services discrimination, for investigation and resolution. The DYA shall notify the EEOC or the OCR in writing of any referral within ninety (90) calendar days of its receipt of the complaint. If the DYA refers the complaint to an external agency, the Civil Rights Officer will provide a written notice to the complainant stating that the complaint was referred to an external agency, notifying the complainant of that external agency's contact information, and identifying the civil rights provision(s) involved.

If the DYA determines that it will investigate the complaint, it shall issue letters of notification to the complainant and the respondent. Opening a complaint for investigation in no way implies that the DYA has made a determination with regard to the merits of the complaint. During the investigation, the DYA is a neutral fact-finder. The DYA shall collect and analyze relevant information and evidence from the complainant, the respondent, and other sources as appropriate. The DYA shall ensure that the investigations are legally sufficient and address the allegations raised in the complaint.

If the DYA elects to investigate a complaint that involves a federal civil rights law over which the OCR has jurisdiction, the OCR retains authority (1) to conduct supplementary or *de novo* investigations; (2) to approve, modify, or reject recommended findings; (3) to approve, modify or reject proposed voluntary resolutions; and (4) to initiate formal enforcement action.

Investigation of the Complaint

The DYA may use a variety of fact-finding techniques in its investigation of a complaint. These techniques may include reviewing documentary evidence submitted by both parties; conducting interviews with the complainant, respondent's personnel, and other witnesses; and conducting site visits. At the conclusion of its investigation, the DYA shall determine with regard to each

allegation whether a preponderance of the evidence supports a conclusion that the respondent failed to comply with the law.

The DYA's determination shall be explained in a letter of findings sent to the complainant and the respondent. Letters of findings contain fact-specific investigative findings and dispositions of individual cases. Letters of findings are not formal statements of OCR policy and they should not be relied upon, cited, or construed as such. The DYA's formal policy statements are approved by a duly-authorized DYA official and made available to the public.

Resolution of the Complaint after a Determination of Noncompliance

If the DYA determines that a respondent failed to comply with one of the civil rights laws the OCR enforces, the DYA will contact the respondent and will attempt to secure the respondent's willingness to negotiate a voluntary resolution agreement. If the respondent agrees to resolve the complaint, the respondent will negotiate and sign a written resolution agreement describing the specific remedial actions that the respondent will undertake to address the area(s) of noncompliance identified by the DYA. The terms of the resolution agreement, if fully performed, will remedy the identified violation(s) in compliance with applicable civil rights laws. The DYA shall monitor the respondent's implementation of the terms of the resolution agreement to verify that (1) the remedial actions agreed to by the respondent have been implemented consistent with the terms of the agreement and (2) the area(s) of noncompliance identified were resolved consistent with applicable civil rights laws.

If the respondent refuses to negotiate a voluntary resolution agreement or does not immediately indicate its willingness to negotiate, the DYA will inform the respondent it has thirty (30) calendar days to indicate its willingness to engage in negotiations to voluntarily resolve identified areas of noncompliance, or the DYA shall forward the case to either the EEOC, if the complaint alleges employment discrimination within that agency's jurisdiction, or the OCR, if the complaint alleges services discrimination within that agency's jurisdiction.

Request for Reconsideration or Appeal of DYA's Determination

The DYA is committed to a high-quality resolution of every case. The DYA affords an opportunity to the complainant to submit a request for reconsideration or an appeal of a DYA determination that is not in the complainant's favor. If the complainant disagrees with the DYA's decision to dismiss or administratively close a complaint for any reason (e.g., jurisdiction, timeliness, or other administrative reasons), s/he may send a written request for reconsideration to the Civil Rights Officer within sixty (60) calendar days of the date of the DYA's administrative closure letter. If the complainant disagrees with the DYA decision finding insufficient evidence to support the complaint allegation(s) after investigation, s/he may send a written appeal to the Civil Rights Officer within sixty (60) calendar days of the date of the DYA's letter of findings. Requests for reconsideration and appeals shall be sent to:

Civil Rights Officer
Guam Department of Youth Affairs
Government of Guam
P.O. Box 23672
GMF, Barrigada, Guam 96921

The review process provides an opportunity for complainants to bring information to the DYA's attention that may change the DYA's decision. For both requests for reconsideration and appeals, the complainant must explain why s/he believes the factual information was incomplete, the analysis of facts were incorrect, and/or the appropriate legal standard was not applied, and how those would change the DYA's determination in the case. Failure to do so may result in the denial of the request for reconsideration or appeal. The review process will not be a *de novo* review (i.e., the DYA shall not review the matter as if no previous decision has been rendered) of the DYA's decision.

E. Policy Dissemination

The DYA Civil Rights Compliance Policy will be made available to all employees, clients, customers, program participants, applicants, subgrantees, and consumers. This Policy shall be included with orientation materials given to all new employees, available on shared computer access, and available on the DYA's website (dya.guam.gov), and given to employees during training on the policy. Non-discrimination clauses shall also be incorporated in all agreements, award packets, and contracts with vendors who contract with the DYA. Furthermore, all subgrantees of the DYA must acknowledge reviewing the policy by initialing a special condition before receipt of their award.

F. Training and Subgrantee Monitoring

The DYA shall provide training for agency employees on the Civil Rights Compliance Policy periodically. The training shall include an overview of complaint policies and procedures, including an employee's responsibility to refer potential discrimination issues and discrimination complaints from employees, clients, customers, program participants, applicants, subgrantees, and consumers to the Civil Rights Officer.

Through its compliance monitoring process, the DYA ensures that subgrantees have procedures in place for responding to discrimination complaints that employees, clients, program participants, applicants, and consumers file directly with the subgrantee. The DYA also ensures that subgrantees notify their employees, clients, program participants, applicants, and consumers of prohibited discrimination and the procedures for filing an employment or services discrimination complaint.