



Homeward Bound Grievance Policy for Staff & Clients

Purpose

Homeward Bound of WNC is committed to fostering a safe, respectful, and supportive environment for both staff and clients. This grievance policy ensures that concerns or complaints are addressed promptly, fairly, and without fear of retaliation.

Scope

This policy applies to:

- **All Homeward Bound employees**, contractors, and volunteers
- **All Homeward Bound clients**, including individuals receiving services or residing in agency-supported housing

Policy Statement

Everyone has the right to be heard. Homeward Bound encourages open communication and aims to resolve grievances at the earliest possible stage. We believe in accountability, transparency, and continuous improvement in service delivery and workplace culture.

Definitions

- **Grievance:** A formal expression of dissatisfaction related to services, behavior, policies, or treatment.

- **Retaliation:** Any adverse action taken against someone for reporting a grievance or participating in an investigation. Retaliation is strictly prohibited.
-

Grievance Procedure

1. Informal Resolution (Encouraged but Not Required)

Whenever possible, individuals are encouraged to first address concerns directly with the person involved or with a staff member they trust. Many issues can be resolved through respectful dialogue.

2. Formal Grievance Submission

If informal resolution is not possible or appropriate, a formal grievance may be submitted in writing (or verbally if accommodations are needed).

Grievances can be submitted:

- Via email to: Human Resources for staff, Program Director for Clients
- In person to a Program Manager, Program Director, Human Resources or the CEO
- Anonymously via : Anonymous Human Resources Reporting Form (Would then be forwarded as appropriate)

Information to include:

- Name and contact information (unless anonymous)
- Description of the issue
- Date(s) of incident(s)
- Individuals involved (if known)
- Desired resolution or outcome

3. Acknowledgment and Review

- The grievance will be acknowledged within **5 business days**.
- A designated staff member (HR/CEO for staff grievances; Program Director or designee for client grievances) will conduct a **confidential review**.
- If additional information is needed, the grievant may be contacted for clarification or follow-up.

4. Resolution

- A written response (or verbal, if requested) will be provided within **15 business days** of receipt.
- If more time is needed for a thorough investigation, the grievant will be informed of the delay and updated on the timeline.
- Possible outcomes include mediation, corrective action, changes to policy or practice, or no action if the grievance is unsubstantiated.

5. Appeal Process

If the individual is dissatisfied with the outcome, they may appeal in writing within **10 business days** to:

- The Chief Executive Officer (for client grievances)
- The HR Director (for staff grievances)
- The President of the Board of Directors

A final response will be provided within **15 business days**.

Confidentiality

All grievances will be handled with sensitivity and as much confidentiality as possible. Information will only be shared with those involved in resolution or investigation.

Non-Retaliation

Homeward Bound prohibits retaliation against anyone who, in good faith, raises a concern or participates in a grievance process. Retaliation will be considered a serious violation of this policy and may result in disciplinary action.

Accessibility

Grievance procedures are available in alternative formats upon request. Staff will assist clients who need help submitting a grievance due to disability, language, or literacy barriers.

Policy Review

This policy will be reviewed annually to ensure it remains current and effective. Staff and clients will be informed of any changes.

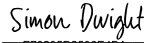
Human Resources Director

Signed by:

690EDC544D044D1...

Date: 7/9/2025

Chief Executive Officer

Signed by:

E73295D2596E4BA...

Date: 7/18/2025

Board of Directors- President

Signed by:

E2A912E30ADF436...

Date: 7/14/2025