

**ALCOHOL, DRUG ADDICTION AND MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES  
BOARD OF CUYAHOGA COUNTY (ADAMHS BOARD)**

**POLICY STATEMENT**

**SUBJECT: CLIENTS RIGHTS AND GRIEVANCE POLICY**

**EFFECTIVE DATE: November 19, 2025**

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**PURPOSE**

To protect and enhance the rights and dignity of clients applying for or receiving services which are funded in whole or in part by the ADAMHS Board and to provide a mechanism whereby consumers, family members, and concerned individuals can grieve so that allegations of rights violations, abuse, and neglect might be investigated and resolved.

Additionally, the ADAMHS Board has statutory authority to investigate allegations of rights violations, abuse, and neglect with clients receiving services Ohio Department of Behavioral Health (DBH) licensed/certified providers not funded by the ADAMHS Board.

**POLICY**

It is the policy of the ADAMHS Board to:

- Affirmatively plan for, assure the protection of, monitor, and fully respond to complaints or grievances concerning rights, granted by statute and/or regulation, of clients applying for or receiving services contracted by the ADAMHS Board.
- Fulfill its statutory obligations, through investigation and referral, regarding the alleged abuse and neglect of persons receiving services from those contracted by the ADAMHS Board.
  - Report all allegations of abuse and neglect, regardless of the source, to DBH in accordance with state law.
  - All allegations of abuse and neglect will be reported to the client's county Board of residence.
  - ADAMHS Board Client Rights staff have the authority to enter any residential facility where abuse or neglect is alleged and to take any necessary action to ensure the safety and wellbeing of clients residing in that facility.
  - Ensure ADAMHS Board compliance with all Federal laws, State laws, and administrative rules and regulations regarding client rights, which include, but are not limited to, confidentiality, access to services, and investigations of alleged rights of violations, abuse, and neglect with clients receiving services from DBH licensed/certified providers not funded by the ADAMHS Board. Submit an annual report to DBH summarizing complaints and grievances received by the ADAMHS Board for the purpose of ensuring the safety of persons seeking or receiving services and supports.

**RESPONSIBILITIES**

It is the responsibility of the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) to:

- Develop and maintain a written procedure which identifies the process through which allegations of violations of client rights, allegations of breach of confidentiality, allegations of

client abuse and neglect, and all related grievances and complaints received within the ADAMHS Board system are handled. See attached Flowchart.

- Annually, or more often if requested by the Directors of the ADAMHS Board, inform the Directors of the activities of the client rights program and make recommendations for action by the ADAMHS Board to assure the protection of client rights.
- Enforce procedures for compliance with confidentiality rules and for reporting abuse, neglect, or discrimination of clients to the ADAMHS Board and monitor as quality measures the ADAMHS Board providers' other abuse reporting requirements under the Code of Federal Regulations, the Ohio Revised Code and Ohio Administrative Code.

**Supersedes and retires:** Client Rights and Grievance Policy, Effective September 26, 2018

Reference: 42 CFR Part 2, ORC 340.03(A)(2), ORC 340.05, OAC 5122-26-18, OAC 5122:2-1-02, ORC 5101.61

Signed by:

*Patricia James-Stewart, M.Ed., LSW*

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Patricia James-Stewart, M.Ed., LSW  
ADAMHS Board Chair

November 19, 2025

Approval date

Signed by:

*Jason Joyce*

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Jason Joyce  
ADAMHS Board Chief Executive Officer

November, 2028

Review date

## ADAMHS Board – Flowchart for Sequence of Steps for MH and SUD from Initial Contact to Resolution.

Client, family member, agency staff, or concerned other contacts ADAMHS Board either by phone, letter, email, or presents in person at the ADAMHS Board. The Client Rights Officer (CRO) will receive initial contact. The contact may be an **Inquiry, Complaint or Grievance**.

If Contact is an Inquiry, ADAMHS Board staff provides information, -refers client to the appropriate service, or redirects to the proper entity. Contact is logged in the database.  
**Resolution is achieved.**

OR

If contact is a **Complaint or Grievance**, ADAMHS Board staff receives the information and logs the information in the database.

- A Complaint means any concern communicated by a person that is not a grievance.
- A Grievance means a written complaint initiated either verbally or in writing by a client or by any other person or agency on behalf of a client regarding denial or abuse of any client's rights. Abuse and Neglect allegations are grievances. One of three courses of action ensues.

**2.1** Caller advised that ADAMHS Board CRO will report **Complaint/ Grievance** to Agency CRO. Caller agrees with this action. ADAMHS Board CRO contacts agency CRO. Agency CRO investigates and renders written resolution within 20 business days for a grievance and 30 calendar days for a complaint.

**2.2** Caller advised that ADAMHS Board CRO will report **Complaint/Grievance** to Agency CRO. Caller does not agree with this action and requests that the ADAMHS Board CRO investigate. ADAMHS Board CRO investigates and renders written resolution within 20 business days for a grievance. A complaint is resolved within 30 calendar days. ADAMHS Board CRO advises agency of resolution.

**2.3** ADAMHS Board does not have jurisdiction. Caller is redirected to proper third-party entity that may serve as advocate. Caller advised of Client Rights and Grievance procedures.  
**Resolution is achieved.**

**2.1A** Complainant / Grievant is satisfied with resolution.  
**Resolution is achieved.**

**2.1B** Complainant/Grievant is not satisfied with resolution rendered by Agency CRO, advised of right to appeal outcome of Complaint / Grievance to ADAMHS Board CRO, Disability Rights Ohio (DRO), DBH, or U.S. Dept of HHS.

**2.2A** Complainant/ Grievant is satisfied with resolution.  
**Resolution is achieved.**

**2.2B** Complainant/Grievant is not satisfied with resolution rendered by ADAMHS Board CRO, advise of right to appeal resolution of Complaint/ Grievance to DRO, DBH, U.S. Dept of HHS.

**2.1Ba** ADAMHS Board CRO investigates and renders written resolution.

**2.1Bb** Complainant/ Grievant is satisfied with resolution. **Resolution is achieved.**

Client chooses to contact DRO, DBH, and/or U.S. Dept of HHS. ADAMHS Board CRO will link Complainant or Grievant to any outside entity.

**Resolution is achieved at this level.**

It should be noted that to resolve an inquiry, complaint or grievance, CRO might need to receive or make more than one phone call. Quite often, callers need time to vent about a certain issue. Also, it takes time to discover what is at the heart of an issue. Someone filing a grievance on behalf of a client **MUST** have the client's written permission. CRO is always available to meet with client and service provider to reach a resolution.