

441—24.7(225C) Complaint process (all services). The division shall receive and record complaints by individuals using the services, employees, any interested people, and the public relating to or alleging violations of applicable requirements of the Iowa Code or administrative rules.

24.7(1) Submittal of complaint. The complaint may be submitted in person; or by mail to the Division of Mental Health and Disability Services, Community, Department of Human Services, Hoover State Office Building, Fifth Floor, 1305 East Walnut, Des Moines, Iowa 50319-0114; electronically through the department's website; by email to division staff; or by telephone.

a. The division shall assist individuals in making a complaint as needed or requested.

b. The information received should specifically state the basis of the complaint. The division shall keep the name of the complainant confidential to the extent allowed by law.

24.7(2) Review of complaint. Upon receipt of a complaint, the division shall make a preliminary desk review of the complaint to determine an appropriate response. That response may include notifying the person who submitted the complaint that there is no basis for a review, referring the complaint to another investigative body, or making a determination to do a full investigation. The complainant may submit a written request for a report of the findings and actions taken by the division as a result of the complaint.

24.7(3) Investigation of complaint. If the division concludes that the complaint is reasonable, has merit, and is based on a violation of rules in this chapter, it may make an investigation of the organization. The division may investigate complaints by an office desk audit or by an on-site investigation. The division shall give priority for on-site investigations to instances when individuals using the service are in immediate jeopardy.

a. If a decision is made to conduct an on-site investigation, the on-site review does not require advance notice to the organization. The division shall notify the chief executive officer and board chairperson of the organization involved before or at the commencement of the on-site investigation that the division has received a complaint.

b. The division shall give the organization an opportunity to informally present a position regarding allegations in the complaint. The organization may submit the position in writing within five working days following the on-site visit or present it in a personal conference with division staff.

c. The division shall submit a written report by certified mail to the chief executive officer of the organization and the chairperson of the board of directors within 20 working days after completion of the investigation.

d. The report shall indicate whether the complaint was or was not substantiated, the basis for the substantiation or nonsubstantiation decision and the specific rules violated, and a recommendation for corrective action with time lines specified in the report.

e. If the complaint is substantiated, the division may take actions deemed appropriate, which may include requiring a corrective action plan, shortening the term of accreditation or suspending or revoking an organization's accreditation, depending on the severity of the substantiated complaint.

f. When the division suspends, shortens or revokes an organization's accreditation as the result of a substantiated complaint, the organization will be notified by certified mail of the findings and actions taken by the division.

g. The date of delivery shown by the certified mail stub shall constitute the date of official notice.

24.7(4) Corrective action plan. When the division acts to suspend or revoke accreditation, there will be no corrective action plan. In other instances, if the complaint is substantiated, the organization shall submit a corrective action plan to the division within 20 calendar days after receiving the division's decision. This plan must respond to violations cited and the division's requirements and include time lines, internal monitoring systems, and performance improvement planning.

Failure of the organization to respond within 20 calendar days with an acceptable corrective action plan that addresses the organization's plan of correction following a substantiated investigation or complaint may of itself constitute the basis for revocation or suspension of accreditation. The division shall determine the appropriate action based on the information submitted. The division shall notify the organization in writing of any action taken.

[ARC 6321C, IAB 5/18/22, effective 7/1/22]