

Grievance Procedure

Policy brief & purpose

The Long Beach - South Bay chapter of the California Association of Marriage and Family Therapists (The LBSB Chapter) is committed to fostering the open expression ideas with the goal of promoting supportive relationships, professional development, and useful networking opportunities. With these goals in mind, the Chapter has adopted guidelines intended to delineate a supportive and effective grievance resolution process.

Our grievance procedure policy explains how members of our community of licensed clinicians, pre-licensed clinicians, trainees, students, volunteer board members and related professionals (Members) can voice their complaints in a constructive way. Members of our Chapter should be able to follow a fair grievance procedure to be heard and avoid conflicts. The Chapter encourages members to communicate their grievances in accordance with the policy outlined herein.

Scope

This policy refers to all Members of the Chapter regardless of position or status.

Grievance definition

We define grievance as any complaint, problem or concern of a Member regarding their membership experience, role or co-member relationships.

Members can file grievances for any of the following reasons:

- Refund requests
- Complaints about course content or style
- Complaints about facilities
- Complaints about non-receipt of certificates
- Complaints about miscellaneous occurrences

This list is not exhaustive. However, Members should try to resolve less important issues informally before they resort to a formal grievance.

Members who file grievances can:

- Reach out informally to any member of the Grievance Committee (each referred to as a Grievance Director) by email, phone call or in person meeting
- File a formal grievance with the Grievance Committee explaining the situation in detail

- Appeal any formal decision to the Board of Directors

Members who face allegation have the right to:

- Receive a copy of the allegations against them
- Respond to the allegations
- Appeal any formal decision to the Board of Directors

The Chapter is obliged to:

- Form a Grievance Committee, comprised of the President and two members of the Chapter or Board of Directors
- Have a formal grievance procedure in place
- Communicate the procedure
- Investigate all grievances promptly
- Treat all Members who file grievances equally
- Preserve Members' confidentiality at every stage of the process
- Resolve grievances whenever possible
- Respect its no-retaliation policy when Members file grievances with the Chapter
- Document grievances and maintain privacy of documents in the Grievance Committee Shared Google Drive

Procedures

Members are encouraged to talk to each other to resolve their differences. When this isn't possible, Members should follow the following procedure:

A. Resolve the grievance informally

1. Communicate informally with a member of the Grievance Committee. The chosen Grievance Director will try to resolve the problem. If the problem cannot be resolved informally, the Grievance Director will help facilitate a formal grievance process as outlined below.
2. Complaints about any member of the Grievance Committee should first be addressed to that Grievance Director. Members are encouraged to request an informal meeting and to try to discuss the matter and resolve it themselves with the Grievance Director. The Grievance Director will try to resolve any grievance as professionally and quickly as possible. If the problem cannot be resolved informally, the Grievance Director will refer the matter to the Grievance Committee and cooperate with all other procedures.
3. The Grievance Committee will keep accurate records, documenting the date, substance, intervention and resolution of the informal grievance.

B. Resolve the grievance formally

1. Member will file a formal grievance form with the Grievance Committee
2. Committee will talk with the Member to ensure the matter is understood completely
3. Provide the Member who faces allegations with a copy of the grievance

4. Organize mediation procedures (e.g. arranging a formal meeting)
5. Investigate the matter or ask the help of an investigator when needed
6. Keep all Members involved with the Grievance informed throughout the process
7. Communicate the formal decision to all Members involved
8. Take actions to ensure the formal decision is adhered to
9. Keep accurate records
10. Report to the Board of Directors, maintaining Members' confidentiality to the maximum extent possible.

C. Appeal to the Board of Directors

1. Any Member who feels that they have been treated unfairly by the Grievance Committee can appeal the Committee's Decision to the Board of Directors. The Member's appeal will delineate the precise grounds for seeking further review.
 2. Board of Directors will review the appeal and determine whether further review is warranted. The Board of Directors reserves the right to decline the request for appeal.
 3. If warranted, deal with appeal by gathering more information and investigating further
 4. Keep all Members involved with the Grievance informed throughout the process
 5. Communicate the final decision to all Members involved
 6. Take actions to ensure the formal decision is adhered to
 7. Keep accurate records
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