

## **CONSUMER RIGHTS COMPLAINT PROCESS**

(Welfare and Institutions Code Section 4731)

(This complaint process is not for resolving disputes concerning the nature, scope or amount of services and supports involving an individual program plan or for resolving disputes regarding rates or audit appeals. Contact the Regional Center to obtain information on these other dispute resolution or appeal processes.)

1. Each consumer of regional center services, or any representative acting on behalf of any consumer, who believes that any right to which the consumer is entitled has been abused, punitively withheld, or improperly or unreasonably denied by a regional center, developmental center, or a service provider, may pursue a complaint.
2. The complaint shall be to the director of the regional center from which the consumer receives case management services.
3. The director shall investigate the complaint within 20 working days of receiving a complaint and send a written proposed resolution to the complainant and, if applicable, to the service provider. Working days do not include weekend days and state/federal holidays. The statute does not allow for extensions of the 20-working day deadline, even with the consent from the complainant.
4. If the complainant is not satisfied with the proposed resolution, the complainant may refer the complaint, in writing, to the Director of Developmental Services within 15 working days of receipt of the proposed resolution.
5. The director of the State Department of Developmental Services shall, within 45 days of receiving a complaint, issue a written administrative decision and send a copy of the decision to the complainant, regional center director, and if applicable, the service provider. The proposed resolution becomes effective on the 20<sup>th</sup> working day following receipt by the complainant, if there is no referral to the department.
6. During intake and at each IPP meeting, consumer, or where appropriate, parents, guardian, conservator, or authorized representative are to be notified, in writing, in a language which they comprehend, of the right to file a complaint.