

GRIEVANCE PROCEDURES

It is the objective of the Denton Housing Authority to resolve disputes at the lowest level possible, and to make every effort to avoid the most severe remedies. However, if this is not possible, DHA will ensure that applicants and participants will receive all the protections and rights afforded by the law and the regulations.

It may be, from time to time, that problems arise with understanding of rules and regulations or with compliance. Should such problems arise applicants and participants are afforded the right to have access to several avenues which might lead to better understanding and/or to a solution to the problem.

These avenues consist of:

Informal Counseling:

The applicant or participant may make an appointment to meet with the Intake Officer, Case Specialist, or other DHA representative to discuss the action, inaction or decision of DHA. The applicant or participant must request this meeting in writing within 10 business days after notification of a grievant event. A Counseling session will be scheduled within 10 days. If possible, a decision will be made at this meeting. In all cases a written notification will be mailed within five (5) days of the date of this meeting. If the applicant or participant does not agree with the decision, the applicant or participant may request an Informal Review or Hearing.

Informal Hearing for Participants:

If a participant does not agree with the decision reached at the Informal Counseling of their grievance with the Case Specialist or other DHA representative, they may request an Informal Hearing. **To request an Informal Hearing, the applicant must first have had an Informal Counseling meeting.** The request for an Informal Hearing must be made in writing within five (5) days from the date of notification of a decision from an Informal Counseling meeting. The request for an Informal Hearing must contain the reason for the grievance, the action or relief sought, and a phone number where they can be reached to schedule the Hearing. DHA will schedule the Hearing within 30 days. The notice of the Hearing will be mailed to the participant. The family may request information or documentation from their file five (5) days before the Hearing at the family's expense. The family must provide any documentation they will use for the Hearing to the PHA five (5) days prior to the Hearing. Only documents directly relevant to the hearing may be used.

DHA will select a Hearing Officer who may be any person or persons designated by the PHA, but will not be the person or a subordinate of the person who made or approved the decision under review.

After a hearing date is set, the family may request to reschedule only for an unavoidable conflict which seriously affects the health, safety, or welfare of the family. If the family does not appear at a scheduled hearing, the original determination will stand.

The Hearing Officer will determine whether the action, inaction or decision of the PHA is legal in accordance with HUD regulations and this Administrative Plan based upon the evidence and testimony provided at the hearing. Notice of hearing findings will be provided in writing to the participant after the hearing within ten (10) days.

Case Review by Chief Executive Officer:

After an Informal Counseling meeting and after an Informal Review or Hearing, a participant may request a Case Review by the Chief Executive Officer (CEO). This request must be in writing, and must contain the dates and times of the other Counseling and Hearing meetings, reason for this request, and a phone number where the participant may be reached to discuss any question the CEO may have. The CEO will meet with staff and review the documentation in the file. The CEO will notify the participant in writing within ten (10) days of their decision.

Board of Commissioners:

Clients or residents of the Housing Authority with a grievance may address the Board of Commissioners during Open Forum without placing the item on the agenda. If the client or resident feels they need more discretion, then they may present a formal request to be included on the agenda in order to protect their privacy and the Board may hear the person's appeal without the public being present. During a grievance, clients or residents shall limit their remarks to three (3) or less minutes. At the discretion of the presiding officer or a majority of the Commissioners, any speaker may be granted an extension of time to speak. And the person may be allowed to respond to questions from the Commissioners. The Board of Commissioners may ask DHA staff to be present during an appeal.