

# *Southeastern Virginia Homeless Coalition*



*Homelessness will be Rare, Brief, and Non-Recurring*

## **SVHC Participant Grievance Policy**

*This notice is to inform you that you have a right to express any grievance you may have with either the program staff or activities where you are being served AND/OR with the SVHC Process through a formal grievance procedure. Please see below to ensure you are directing your grievance to the appropriate point of contact.*

### ***What type of Grievance do I have?***

**1) Housing Program Grievances** are those related to a program participant's experience(s) with a specific homeless housing program, its staff and/or an eligibility decision. For example, if you are staying at a shelter and disagree with an activity or staff member at the shelter, you would follow the grievance procedure provided to you by that shelter. Additionally, if you are told by an agency you are not eligible for their program, you would follow their grievance policy if you disagree with that decision. All grievances that cannot be resolved to the satisfaction of the participant through the agency's grievance process, may be submitted to The Planning Council in writing. The Executive Committee will review your grievance and respond in writing within 30 days.

**2) SVHC Grievances** SVHC Grievances are those related to Coordinated Entry policies and/or procedures. Common examples include an outreach worker or hotline staff member refusing to offer you services when requested, failure of a provider to refer you to an open vacancy for housing assistance or declining to serve you because you lack income. SVHC grievances must be in writing and it is recommended you use the attached form. They must address the following at a minimum:

- A statement describing the nature of the grievance, the approximate date of the events leading to the grievance, the names of the organization or person involved, and any other information that should be considered.
- Whether a meeting with the decision-maker is requested.
- A recommendation for resolution.

### ***Where do I send my Grievance?***

**1) Housing Program Grievances** should be sent directly to the agency for which you are filing a Grievance. Each agency is required to provide you a copy of their policy once you become a participant in their program. Read the policy carefully and follow the agency's instructions. If you have questions – ASK!

**2) SVHC Grievances** should be sent to:

The Planning Council  
Attn: SVHC Grievance

2551 Eltham Avenue, Suite I  
Norfolk, Virginia 23513  
(757) 622-9268  
[svhc@theplanningcouncil.org](mailto:svhc@theplanningcouncil.org)

### ***What happens after I submit my Grievance?***

**1) Housing Program Grievances** You will receive a response directly from the provider based on the timeframes outlined in the specific agency's Grievance Procedure. If the agency does not outline a specific timeframe in their procedure, they must respond to your request within 14 days.

**2) SVHC Grievances** The SVHC meets at least once per month and may not be able to convene in person to hear your Grievance timely, as such it is possible that your Grievance may be heard via telephone to expedite the process. Your Grievance will be heard via telephone or in person within 14 days of your request and a final decision will be provided in writing no later than 30 days from the date of your Grievance.

### ***Where do I file a Complaint for Discrimination?***

Virginia's Fair Housing Law makes it illegal to discriminate in residential housing on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin, sex, elderliness, familial status and disability. The law prohibits applying one standard to one class of individuals while applying a different standard to another class of individuals.

#### **Department of Professional and Occupational Regulation (DPOR)**

To learn more about your Virginia Fair Housing rights, please read more here:

<http://www.dpor.virginia.gov/FairHousing/>

To file a formal Fair Housing complaint with the Commonwealth of Virginia, contact:

Regulatory Programs and Compliance Section  
Department of Professional and Occupational Regulation  
9960 Mayland Drive, Suite 400  
Richmond, Virginia 23233-1463  
Phone: (804) 367-8504  
FAX: (866) 282-3932  
Email: [ComplaintAnalysis@dpor.virginia.gov](mailto:ComplaintAnalysis@dpor.virginia.gov)

#### **U.S. Dept. of Housing & Urban Development (HUD)**

To learn more about your federal Fair Housing Act rights, please read more here:

[https://www.hud.gov/program\\_offices/fair\\_housing\\_equal\\_opp/online-complaint](https://www.hud.gov/program_offices/fair_housing_equal_opp/online-complaint)

To file a formal Fair Housing complaint with HUD, contact:

(888) 799-2085 or file a complaint online at:

<https://portalapps.hud.gov/AdaptivePages/HUD/complaint/complaint-details.htm>