DSS - METHODS OF ADMINISTRATION

Prohibited Practices

The Department of Social Services (DSS) and its sub-recipients, in determining the types of services, financial aid, or other benefits, or facilities that will be provided under any such program, or the class of individuals to whom, or the situations in which, such services, financial aid, other benefits, or facilities will be provided under such program, or the class of individuals to be afforded an opportunity to participate in any such program, may not, directly or through contractual or other arrangements, utilize criteria or methods of administration that have the effect of subjecting individuals to discrimination because of their race, color, or national origin, or have the effect of defeating or substantially impairing accomplishment of the objectives of the program with respect to individuals of a particular race, color, or national origin.

In determining the site or location of any facilities, any applicant or the DSS and its sub-recipients may not make selections with the effect of excluding individuals from, denying them the benefits of, or subjecting them to discrimination under any programs to which the Title VI Regulation applies, on the ground of race, color, or national origin, or with the purpose or effect of defeating or substantially impairing the accomplishment of the objectives of the Act or Regulation.

The services, financial aid, or other benefits provided under a program receiving federal financial assistance shall be deemed to include any services, financial aid, or other benefits provided in or through a facility provided with the aid of federal financial assistance.

In administering a program that the DSS and its sub-recipients have previously discriminated against persons on the ground of race, color, or national origin, both must take affirmative action to overcome the effects of prior discrimination.

Even in the absence of such prior discrimination in administering a program, the DSS and its sub-recipients may take affirmative action to overcome the effects of conditions that resulted in limiting participation by persons of a particular race, color, or national origin.

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COMPLAINT PROCEDURE

Any person who believes that he/she or any specific class of individuals are or have been subjected to discrimination prohibited by Title VI may **file a written complaint with the Secretary, Office for Civil Rights, Department of Health and Human Services, Region 1-Room 1875, J.F.K. Federal Building, Boston, MA 02203.** The complaint must be filed no later than 180 days from the date of the alleged discrimination, unless the time for filing is extended by the Secretary.

The identity of complainants shall be kept confidential, except to the extent necessary to carry out any investigation, hearing, or judicial proceeding arising from the complaint.

The DSS, its sub-recipient or other person may not intimidate, threaten, coerce, or discriminate against any individual for the purpose of interfering with any right or privilege secured by Title VI Act or Regulation because he/she has made a complaint, testified, assisted, or participated in any manner in an investigation, proceeding or hearing.

A copy of the DSS Title VI Civil Rights Act of 1964 Complaint Resolution Procedure is included in this section.

TITLE VI - CIVIL RIGHTS ACT OF 1964
COMPLAINT RESOLUTION PROCEDURE

TITLE VI PROCEDURE

The purpose of this procedure is to provide a method by which compliance with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 is assured and to provide a method for dealing with complaints related to the act.

Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 prohibits discrimination on the ground of race, color, or national origin in programs and activities receiving federal financial assistance. No person shall be excluded on the grounds of race, color, or national origin from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be otherwise subjected to discrimination under any program or activity administered by the Department of Social Services and/or its grantees.

Each active and potential beneficiary has the right and the opportunity to file a complaint of alleged discrimination by following the Department of Social Services' Title VI Complaint Resolution procedure.

PROCEDURE:

The Civil Rights Officer should initially be notified of all complaints of alleged Title VI discrimination. The Commissioner of the Department of Social Services, however, must also be notified of all complaints alleging Title VI discrimination. The Civil Rights Office and the Office of the Commissioner are located at 25 Sigourney Street, Hartford CT, 06106. The telephone numbers are 424-5040 and 424-5008 respectively.

All complaints alleging discrimination because of race, color, or national origin must be made in writing. The complaint must describe the alleged discrimination in sufficient detail. The pertinent facts and circumstances of alleged act of discrimination, including names of persons involved and witnesses, if any, must be fully and sufficiently explained. The complaints must be signed by the complainant or by his/her representative.

After a complaint has been investigated, the Civil Rights Officer, as the Commissioner's designee, shall determine if an act of discrimination has occurred. If it has, he/she shall take appropriate action to correct and to prevent recurrence of the discriminatory act. The Commissioner must be notified promptly of the outcome of the investigation by the Civil Rights Officer. The complainant will be informed in writing as to the Department's findings.

If the complainant is not satisfied with the Department's investigation and findings, he/she may request an opportunity for a hearing before the Commissioner of Social Services at which time he/she may present the evidence and/or witnesses of the alleged act of discrimination as presented to the Civil Rights Officer that formed the basis of the investigation.

As a result of the hearing, the Commissioner may support or reverse the findings of the investigation conducted by the Civil Rights Officer. The Commissioner's determination is final as to the investigation conducted by the Department. The Department of Social Services will maintain records of each complaint, investigation findings, rulings and action taken.

While the Department of Social Services may investigate every complaint of alleged discrimination submitted to the Civil Rights Office, the Department must cooperate in the investigation of any complaint of alleged discrimination brought against it by any authorized enforcement agency.

Every complainant has a right to due process that requires the prompt and equitable resolution of his/her complaint filed under this procedure. The Civil Rights Officer shall attempt to resolve the alleged discriminatory act within a time frame not to exceed ninety (90) calendar days after the complaint is filed. Other avenues or remedies such as, filing a complaint with the Office of Civil Rights of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services or other agencies are not impaired when the complainant invokes this procedure. **Utilization of this grievance procedure is not prerequisite to the pursuit of other remedies.**

You may file a complaint with the following: the Connecticut Commission on Human Rights and Opportunities (C.H.R.O.) within 180 days of the alleged discriminatory acts:

Southwest Region
350 Fairfield Avenue
6th Floor
Bridgeport, CT 06604
Telephone:(203) 579-6246

Eastern Region
100 Broadway
Norwich, CT 06360
Telephone:(860) 886-5703

West Central Region
Rowland State Government Center
55 West Main Street, Suite 210
Waterbury, CT 06702
Telephone:(203) 805-6530

Capitol Region
999 Asylum Avenue
Second Floor
Hartford, CT 06105
Telephone:(860) 566-7710

2. The Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS), within 180 days of the alleged discriminatory act(s):

   DHHS Regional Office for Civil Rights
   Region 1
   John F. Kennedy Federal Building
   Room 1875
   Boston, MA 02203
   (617) 565-1340

3. The Department of Energy (DOE), within 180 days of the alleged discriminatory act(s):

   Director
   Federally Assisted Programs Division
   Office of Equal Opportunity
   Department of Energy
   Washington, D.C. 20585