

Customer Service Complaint Handling**Policy No. CR- 1140.02**

Effective date: January 31, 2018

No. of Pages: 2

Policy

It is the policy of Georgia WIC that all complaints will be handled in a timely fashion to a resolution of customer satisfaction and/or understanding.

Purpose

To ensure that applicant and participants complaints are investigated, resolved, and analyzed to improve the immediate customer service complaint as well as identify potential local or state program improvements.

* Please see [Policy CR 1140.01](#) for procedures related to complaints of discrimination based on protected class and participant education about the complaint process.

Procedures

- I. All applicants and participants must be provided education about their right to file a complaint, how to file a complaint, and how a complaint will be processed at the eligibility determination ([see Policy CR 1140.01](#)).
- II. Any complaints by participants about Georgia WIC Vendors must be referred to the State WIC Office 1-800-228-9173 for investigation and resolution.
- III. Any complaints from Georgia WIC Vendors about Georgia WIC participants must be referred to the State WIC Vendor Office 1-800-228-9173 for investigation and resolution.
- IV. An applicant or participant may file a complaint regarding staff, clinic treatment, vendors, or Georgia WIC policy and procedure at the local, state, or federal agency level.
- V. The local agency or state agency may file a complaint regarding a Georgia WIC participant who is alleged to have violated the Georgia WIC Rights and Obligations.
- VI. Complaints (except for discrimination complaints – see [Policy CR 1140.01](#)) should be handled at the closest level to the complaint to obtain the earliest resolution.
- VII. Every effort should be made to resolve an applicant or participant complaint within twenty-four hours. If an applicant or participant is making the complaint while still in the clinic for service, every effort should be made to resolve the participant complaint prior to the applicant or participant leaving the clinic.
- VIII. All complaints should be closed within 90 days of the initial report with all corrections and resolutions completed including communication with the applicant or participant about the resolution.

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- IX. All complaints submitted to the State Agency must be documented on the incident/complaint form.
- X. All written complaints must be submitted to the State Agency on the [incident/complaint form](#) with the resolution completed unless State Agency assistance with the resolution is required. Please Email the password protected form to GeorgiaWICCivilRights@dph.ga.gov
- XI. The local agency is required to document and maintain records of complaints received at the local level to include the resolution of the complaint. It is recommended that the local agency document complaints utilizing the [incident/complaint form](#) to assure complete documentation and for follow-up purposes.
- XII. The local agency should analyze locally received complaints annually to identify complaint trends and develop a plan to improve or report to the state agency policy and procedure concerns.
- XIII. All complaints submitted to the State Agency from or about Georgia WIC applicants and participants will be documented on the [incident/complaint](#) form.
- XIV. For anonymous complaints capture as much information as possible and handle in the same manner as other complaints.
- XV. If a complaint received at the state agency requires the local agency to follow-up with the investigation and/or resolution of the complaint, the local agency must document the information on the [incident/complaint](#) form that is sent to the local agency by the state agency.
- XVI. All Georgia WIC staff should immediately respond to a complaint and resolve issues.
- XVII. All complaints from or about Georgia WIC participants must be kept confidential as WIC participant protected information.
- XVIII. The local WIC agency will maintain the documentation of complaints received at the local level for five (5) years plus current. The State agency will maintain the documentation of complaints received at the state level for five (5) years plus current.

Authority

7 CFR § 246.8(b)

FNS Instruction 113-1