

CLIENT GRIEVANCE POLICY

The following explains your right to file a written complaint with the Maryland Disability Law Center (MDLC). You have the right to file a complaint if you believe that we have wrongly denied you assistance in dealing with a disability-related legal matter, or if you believe that we have not provided you with effective assistance. If you are unable to provide a written complaint, you may instead explain your complaint in person or over the telephone, or we can help you to make a written complaint. If you need additional information about MDLC's Client Grievance Policy, we will be glad to provide that information to you.

Your Right to Services

- X MDLC is a private organization authorized by Federal law to provide certain types of advocacy services and legal help for eligible persons with disabilities in Maryland.
- X We can help eligible individuals with disabilities in many ways, including: (1) pursuing legal, administrative and other appropriate remedies in order to protect the rights of eligible individuals with disabilities in the State; (2) providing information about and making referrals to other programs that can help individuals with disabilities; and (3) coordinating our programs with other programs that serve individuals with disabilities.
- X However, because of limited funding for our program, we cannot handle every complaint or case that comes to us. To effectively serve Maryland residents with disabilities, we have developed priorities that guide us in deciding which cases we can accept. Unfortunately, if your problem or concern is not covered by our priorities, or if our limited resources will not allow us to take on your issue, we may not be able to help you. If we cannot provide direct help, we will try to let you know about other agencies or persons who can.

Grievance Rights

- X If you are already a client of MDLC, or if you are simply asking for our help, you have the right to file a written grievance if you are unhappy with our services. For example, you might want to file a grievance if you believe that: (1) we did not provide you with effective services; (2) we wrongly denied you help; or (3) we violated our legal obligations. If you want, we can give you more detailed information about what the law requires of any one of our programs.

How to File a Grievance

- X You (or your representative) must file a written grievance within 30 work days after the occurrence of the decision or incident with which you disagree. You may either mail to us a completed MDLC grievance form (this is attached) or mail a letter that explains why you believe our decision was wrong. You should sign and date the form or letter. If you cannot give us a written grievance, you may give us your grievance orally (e.g., by telephone, in person, or by audio tape) or ask us to help you write your grievance.

- X Written grievances should be mailed to the Executive Director of MDLC at the address listed on the first page. Within 15 work days, the Executive Director will give you a written decision about your complaint. If needed, we will write a plan to correct the problems and make sure that we provide the proper services to you as soon as possible.

- X If you are unhappy with the written decision of the Executive Director, you may send a letter to our Board of Directors asking that the Board review that decision. The letter should be sent to the Chair of the MDLC Board of Directors:

President, MDLC Board of Directors
c/o MDLC
1800 N. Charles Street; Suite 400
Baltimore, MD 21201

- X You must make this request within 30 work days of the date you receive the Executive Director's decision. The decision of the Board will be given to you within 30 work days. This will be our final decision.

- X If you need more information about your rights under this policy, please let us know.