

 <p style="text-align: center;">ALLEGHENY COUNTY BUREAU OF CORRECTIONS</p>	APPLICABILITY: All Authorized Personnel	
	POLICY NUMBER: #505	EFFECTIVE: 7/13/15 REVIEWED: 12/12/22
	TITLE: Electronic Request/Complaint Procedures Title 37-95.223(4) ACA: 6B-01 PREA: 115.52	
	AUTHORIZED BY: ORLANDO L. HARPER SIGNATURE:	

POLICY

It is the policy of the Allegheny County Bureau of Corrections to provide inmates an internal grievance mechanism for resolving complaints arising from institutional matters, so as to reduce the need for litigation and afford authorized personnel the opportunity to improve jail operations. All inmates can submit electronic request/complaints through the tablets to the proper authorities without censorship.

PURPOSE

To describe the inmate complaint procedure that will be available to all inmates in the Allegheny County Jail.

SCOPE

All authorized personnel and inmates.

PROCEDURAL GUIDELINES

The inmate electronic request/complaint/appeal procedure is an internal administrative means for resolving complaints and identifying potentially problematic management areas. It is designed to supplement, but not replace, the informal communication process or disciplinary procedures. Each department head or designated supervisor of the Allegheny County Jail is responsible to ensure electronic request/complaints are answered addressing the issues and the request are responded to in a timely manner.

SECTION 1: Filing

- An inmate may file an electronic request/complaint about their present detainment at any time during their incarceration for the purpose of bringing a problem to the attention of jail personnel.
- An inmate may file an electronic request/complaint or an appeal only for him or herself, although an inmate may assist another inmate in filing an electronic request/complaint or appeal.
- No electronic request/complaint will be entertained from a group or representative of any group.

SECTION 2: Basis for Request/Complaints

- An electronic request/complaint may be initiated for an alleged violation of civil, constitutional, or statutory rights, or of policy, an alleged criminal or prohibited act by authorized personnel, or to resolve a condition existing within the Jail which deals with the amount of an inmate's bond.
- Matters dealing with institutional disciplinary procedures will be dealt with by the Program Review Committee (P.R.C.). Inmate security status is a classification issue and cannot be grieved.

Section 3: Electronic Request/Complaints Can Be Sent to the Below Listed Departments:

- Alternative Housing
- Captains
- Cashier/Inmate Trust Fund
- Chaplain
- Classification
- Commissary
- Discharge and Release
- Disciplinary Disposition Appeal
- Educational Program
- Food Service
- Inmate Visitation
- Internal Affairs
- Caseworkers
- Medical Complaints
- Phone/tablets
- Pre-Release
- Records
- Re-Entry Programs
- Sergeants
- Special Diet (Religious or Medically Ordered)

- u. Substance Abuse
- v. Video Arraignment
- w. Intel Group
- x. Warden's Office

Section 4: Procedures to Send Electronic Request/Complaints:

Inmates can submit electronic requests/complaints to the departments listed above. Inmates having concerns about any issues other than Alternative Housing, Cashier/Inmate Trust Fund, Chaplain, Classification, Commissary, Discharge and Release, Disciplinary Disposition Appeal, Educational Program, Food Service, Inmate Visitation, Internal Affairs, Intel Group, Caseworkers, Medical Complaints, Phone/tablets, Pre-Release, Records, Re-Entry Programs, Substance Abuse or Video Arraignment can submit their first request to the Sergeant's group.

Section 5: Appeal Procedures for Electronic Request/Complaints

If the inmate is not satisfied with the response from the Sergeant's group, the inmate shall send a second request to the Captain's group. The Captain shall review the response from the Sergeant and submit a response to the inmate. If the inmate is still not satisfied with the response from the Captain, the inmate can send a request to the Warden's Office group. The Majors (Warden's Group) shall review the response from the Sergeant and the Captain and if any guidance is needed from the Deputy Warden or higher ranking official, they will seek guidance and respond to the inmate for the final response.

If the inmate is not satisfied with the response from Alternative Housing, Cashier/Inmate Trust Fund, Chaplain, Classification, Commissary, Discharge and Release, Disciplinary Disposition Appeal, Educational Program, Food Service, Inmate Visitation, Internal Affairs, Intel Group, Caseworkers, Medical Complaints, Phone/tablets, Pre-Release, Records, Re-Entry Programs, Substance Abuse or Video Arraignment, they can send their 2nd request to the Warden's Office group. The Majors (Warden's Group) shall review the response. If any guidance is needed from the Deputy Warden or higher ranking official, they will seek guidance and respond to the inmate for the final response.

Section 6: Electronic Request/Complaint Procedures for Laptops

Inmates having questions pertaining to laptops provided to the ACJ from outside entities shall submit their electronic request slips directly to the Warden's Office group.

Section 7: Timeline to Respond to Electronic Request/Complaints

All electronic request/complaints responses at each level must be provided to the inmate within ten (10) working days, not including Saturday/Sunday or holidays.

Section 8: Electronic Request/Complaint Limits

Inmates are only allowed to submit one (1) electronic request/complaint to each department per day. There is no limit on the amount of PREA electronic request/complaints an inmate can submit.

Section 9: PREA Requests/Complaint

The ACBOC shall not impose a time limit on when an inmate may submit a grievance regarding an allegation of sexual abuse. The ACBOC may apply otherwise-applicable time limits to any portion of a grievance that does not allege an incident of sexual abuse.

The ACBOC shall not require an inmate to use any informal grievance process, or to otherwise attempt to resolve with staff, an alleged incident of sexual abuse. Nothing in this section shall restrict the ACBOC ability to defend against an inmate lawsuit on the ground that the applicable statute of limitations has expired.

The ACBOC shall ensure:

1. An inmate who alleges sexual abuse may submit a grievance without submitting it to a staff member who is the subject of the complaint, and such grievance is not referred to a staff member who is the subject of the complaint.
2. The agency shall issue a final agency decision on the merits of any portion of a grievance alleging sexual abuse within 90 days of the initial filing of the grievance. Computation of the 90-day time period shall not include time consumed by inmates in preparing any administrative appeal.
3. The agency may claim an extension of time to respond, of up to 70 days, if the normal time period for response is insufficient to make an appropriate decision. The agency shall notify the inmate in writing of any such extension and provide a date by which a decision will be made.
4. At any level of the administrative process, including the final level, if the inmate does not receive a response within the time allotted for reply, including any properly noticed extension, the inmate may consider the absence of a response to be a denial at that level.
5. Third parties, including fellow inmates, staff members, family members, attorneys, and outside advocates, shall be permitted to assist inmates in filing requests for administrative remedies relating to allegations of sexual abuse, and shall also be permitted to file such requests on behalf of inmates. If a third

party files such a request on behalf of an inmate, the facility may require as a condition of processing the request that the alleged victim agree to have the request filed on his or her behalf, and will require the alleged victim to personally pursue any subsequent steps in the administrative remedy process. If the inmate declines to have the request processed on his or her behalf, the ACBOC shall document the inmate's decision.

6. The ACBOC shall establish procedures for the filing of an emergency grievance alleging that an inmate is subject to a substantial risk of imminent sexual abuse. After receiving an emergency grievance alleging an inmate is subject to a substantial risk of imminent sexual abuse, the agency shall immediately forward the grievance (or any portion thereof that alleges the substantial risk of imminent sexual abuse) to a level of review at which immediate corrective action may be taken, shall provide an initial response within 48 hours, and shall issue a final decision within 5 calendar days. The initial response and final decision shall document the ACBOC determination whether the inmate is in substantial risk of imminent sexual abuse and the action taken in response to the emergency grievance.
7. The ACBOC may discipline an inmate for filing a grievance related to alleged sexual abuse/sexual harassment only where the agency demonstrates that the inmate filed the grievance in bad faith.

Section 10: Inmate Violation of this Policy

Inmates violating any process of this policy shall be subjected to their request not being answered and/or a misconduct being placed against them.

SECTION 10: Other All electronic request/complaint will be considered confidential.