



Phone: (970) 641-3244 | Fax: (970) 641-3738  
220 N. Spruce, Gunnison, CO 81230  
Website: [www.GunnisonCounty.org](http://www.GunnisonCounty.org)

---

## RESOLUTION PROCESS

### GENERAL DISPUTE RESOLUTION PROCESS

Gunnison/Hinsdale County Department of Health and Human Services (Department) attempts to resolve disputes in an informal manner if possible. If disputes are not resolved to the complainant's satisfaction and if a grievance is initiated, the following formal process is to occur.

Anyone who wishes to file a formal complaint or who disputes actions by a Department employee shall be advised to contact the program supervisor or the Director of Gunnison/Hinsdale County Department of Health and Human Services (Director) by calling 970-641-3244 or by writing to Gunnison/Hinsdale County Department of Health and Human Services, 220 N. Spruce, Gunnison, CO 81230.

The Complainant shall be advised that they may also contact the Colorado Department of Human Services by calling 1-800-536-5298 and working through the menu of options. Complaints related to Child Welfare may also be referred directly to the Colorado Department of Human Services Division of Child Welfare by calling 1-303-866-4511 or the Office of Colorado's Child Protection Ombudsman at (303) 864-5111 or Toll-Free at 1-855-5SAFECCHILD.

The Director is to be notified in writing of any complaint received by an employee no later than 10 calendar days after the complaint is received.

The Director, Deputy Director, Manager or Supervisor will respond to the complaint or grievance within 20 calendar days after receipt by contacting the party by phone or letter.

A record of all complaints formally filed with the Department will be retained by the Director and reported to the State Department of Human Services at the close of each State Fiscal Year.

Documentation of the complaints should be thorough and include:

- name of individual taking the complaint
- date the complaint was received
- complainants name, phone number and address
- a description of the complaint.

Actions taken shall be documented and follow-up documentation shall be provided in writing to the complainant and retained on file by the Director.

## HHS RESOLUTION PROCESS

### ADULT SERVICES:

For concerns about local Health & Human services programs that receive funding from Region 10 Community Living Services under the Older Americans Act, individuals may address their concerns directly to Region 10 by calling 970-249-2436 x 15 or by mail at Region 10 Community Living Services, 300 N Cascade, Suite 1, Montrose, CO 81401. Additionally, complainants not satisfied may contact the State Unit on Aging at 1-303-688-2800 (ask for someone in Aging and Adult Services), Aging and Adult Services, 1575 Sherman, 10<sup>th</sup> Floor, Denver, CO 80203.

### PUBLIC ASSISTANCE APPEALS:

Individuals who apply for public assistance such as Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program or other financial or medical benefits programs may submit their complaint to the Colorado Health Care Policy & Finance team through email ([HCFP\\_membercomplaints@state.co.us](mailto:HCFP_membercomplaints@state.co.us)).

The individuals who apply for public assistance may receive correspondence indicating a denial or other actions. The correspondence will include information on how to pursue an appeal through a request for an informal conference with the local Human Services office and/or by an appeal to the Office of Administrative Courts. The contact information is as follows:

Local Department conference: 970-641-3244 and request to speak with the staff member assigned to the case or to the Manager.

To request a State level hearing:  
Office of Administrative Courts  
633 Seventeenth St., Suite 1300  
Denver, CO 80202  
Phone # 303-866-2000  
Fax # 303-866-5909

CHILD WELFARE DISPUTE (GRIEVANCE) RESOLUTION PROCESS (In accordance with the Rules and Regulations of the Colorado Department of Human Services Volume Seven (7.200.3) )

#### Definitions:

"Grievance" means a complaint regarding the conduct of an employee of the Gunnison/Hinsdale County Department of Health and Human Services in performing his/her duties under Article 3 of the Children's Code. " Grievance" does not include complaints regarding conduct by the courts, attorneys, law enforcement officials, employees of the State, foster parents or other providers of services to children, or other family members.

"Complainant" means any person who was the subject of an investigation of a report of child abuse or neglect or any parent, guardian, or legal custodian of a child who is the subject of a report of child abuse or neglect and brings a grievance against the Department in accordance with the provisions of Section 19-3-211, C.R.S.

"Recommendation" means a proposed course of action that may be implemented by the Director to resolve a grievance. These proposed actions may include reassigning a case to a different employee, requiring an employee to receive training, or administering disciplinary action to an employee, subject to applicable safeguards afforded to the employee through the Gunnison County personnel system.

#### Time Frames for Resolving Grievances:

The Department shall attempt to resolve all grievances informally before using the formal grievance process. Any grievance not resolved to the satisfaction of the complainant shall be forwarded to the Director within ten working days after the grievance has been received by the Department.

The Director shall act on the grievance within twenty calendar days after s/he receives it. If the Director is able to resolve the grievance to the complainant's satisfaction, s/he will issue a written decision setting forth the resolution.

#### Annual Reports

On or before June 30 of each year, the Department shall submit to the State Department an annual report regarding the resolution of grievances pursuant to this section. At a minimum, this report shall include:

1. The number of grievances received by the Director and the actual time frames for resolving grievances.
2. A brief description of the disposition of the grievances, including the number that were concluded without any action taken, the number which were substantiated, the number resolved by case reassignment, the number resolved by requiring additional training, the number resolved by imposing disciplinary action against a county employee, and the number resolved in other ways.

Gunnison/Hinsdale County Department of Health and Human Services shall publicize:

1. The availability of the process for all dependency and neglect cases through the "Notice of Rights and Remedies" and by informing child welfare clients, guardians, and legal custodians of the process during the initial contacts with parties and periodically throughout the provision of services related to dependency and neglect cases.
2. The rights and remedies for families as specified in Colorado Department of Human Services Rules and Regulations Volume 7, Section 7.200.4.
3. Any other information about the process as deemed relevant by the Board.

## HHS RESOLUTION PROCESS

## APPEALING CONFIRMED REPORTS OF CHILD ABUSE OR NEGLECT:

Individuals determined by the Department to be responsible for abuse or neglect may appeal that decision according to the established guidelines for a State level hearing or record review.

The Request For State Level Fair Hearing or Review of County Record Regarding a County Department Confirmation of Child Abuse or Neglect form is provided to the person responsible for abuse or neglect upon notification of the Department's findings and may also be obtained at the Gunnison/Hinsdale County Department of Health and Human Services office, 220 N. Spruce, Gunnison, CO 81230.

## FALSIFICATION OF RECORDS:

Any report of suspected falsification of any record (e.g. Child Welfare/TRAILS, Adult Protection/CAPS, Child Support Services, Public Assistance programs) shall be immediately reported to the Health & Human Services (HHS) Director. The HHS Director shall consult with County Human Resources staff to determine if an employee should be placed on administrative leave or temporary suspension. If the HHS Director determines that an employee will be placed on administrative leave or temporary suspension, the State department shall be requested to suspend the employee's access to the related information system(s) (e.g. TRAILS, CAPS, CBMS) within 1 day of the action.

HHS will make reasonable efforts to promptly preserve evidence for any record being falsified and supervise or restrict the employee's access to the related information system(s) including but not limited to TRAILS, CAPS, CBMS, hard copy case files and other related documents.

HHS will complete an investigation into the report regardless of the employment status of the employee. HHS shall utilize a State Department approved letter of notice when there is any confirmed incident of falsified records (including child welfare, vital records, adult protection and other HHS programs).