

# OREGON YOUTH AUTHORITY

## Policy Summary



### Youth Grievance Process

The following is only a summary of OYA policy [II-F-1.1 Youth Grievance Process-Facility](#). Please refer to the policy for full details and as the official policy record. For other policies, visit <https://www.oregon.gov/oya/aboutoya/pages/policies.aspx>.

A grievance is a complaint about how youth were affected by an OYA rule, policy, or practice. Youth have the right to file a grievance if they believe they have been treated unfairly by OYA or its employees. The grievance process allows youth to express concerns and have them reviewed fairly and without retaliation.

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#### What Can a Youth File a Grievance About?

A grievance can be filed if a youth believes:

- A rule, policy, or decision has negatively affected them.
- They have been treated unfairly by OYA staff.
- There are issues related to their confinement, discipline, treatment, education, or privileges.

However, youth cannot file a grievance about:

- Court decisions or actions by agencies outside of OYA.
- Issues they were not directly involved in.
- Matters already decided by a judge.

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#### How many grievances can youth file?

- No more than two (2) new grievances in any one week, or six (6) in any calendar month. A week is Sunday through Saturday.
- If youth think an emergency situation has happened and need to file more than what is allowed, they must clearly state in writing the reason for filing more than the number allowed. If the grievance coordinator determines that these reasons are not clear, concise, or valid, the grievance will be returned as denied.

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#### How Families Can Support Their Youth

- Parents/guardians are informed about the grievance process during intake.

- A youth representative (such as a parent, attorney, or trusted adult) can file a grievance on behalf of a youth if the youth agrees. Staff have to document a youth's agreement or refusal of a representative's offer to file a grievance on behalf of the youth.
  - If a grievance involves possible civil rights violations or criminal matters, a parent or guardian may file without the youth's consent.
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### **How to File a Grievance**

1. **Get a Grievance Form** – Forms are available in common areas of OYA facilities and on the OYA website.
2. **Fill Out the Form** – The concern must be clearly documented.
3. **Submit the Form** – Youth can place their form in a locked grievance box or give it to a staff member. Family members can submit the form to staff in person or by email.
4. **Receive a Response** – The grievance coordinator will assign a staff member (not involved in the complaint) to review the grievance and respond within seven working days.

**Emergency Grievances:** If a grievance involves a serious safety risk (like abuse, neglect, or immediate danger), it will be reviewed within 24 hours to protect the youth.

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### **What Happens After a Grievance is Filed?**

- **Step 1:** The grievance is assigned, reviewed, and the youth receives a written response.
  - **Step 2:** If the youth is not satisfied, they can request a second review by the facility superintendent or camp director.
  - **Step 3:** If still unresolved, the youth can appeal to the OYA Director's Office, which will respond within 30 days.
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### **Protection from Retaliation**

- Youth will not be punished for filing a grievance.
  - All grievances are tracked to ensure fairness and follow-up.
  - Youth can also call the OYA Reporting Line (800-315-5440) if they feel the grievance process was unfair or their issue is related to youth safety.
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### **Ensuring a Fair Process**

OYA is committed to listening to youth concerns and making sure they are addressed appropriately. The grievance process helps youth advocate for themselves and ensures they are treated fairly while in OYA custody.

For more information, youth and families can ask facility staff or visit the OYA website.