



## Policy: 14.10

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**Title**                    **SSBG Client Grievances**

**Approved by**

**Approval Date:** 04/27/2021

*Clarence H. Carter*

**Effective Date:** 05/01/2021

**Authority**            Tenn. Code Ann. §§ 4-5-301, et seq.  
45 CFR §§ 96.70 et seq.

**Application**        Social Services Block Grant Provider Staff

### Policy Statement

The Tennessee Department of Human Services requires provisions for appeals and fair hearings for applicants and recipients of services.

### Reason for Policy

The right to appeal ensures qualified individuals can apply for services funded by the Social Services Block Grant, and that recipients of those services receive quality care.

### Policy

Each Social Services Block Grant (SSBG) provider's board of directors must develop policies and procedures ensuring qualified applicants or clients of SSBG-funded services can file a grievance regarding their applications and services. The individual's final option for appeal must be to the Tennessee Department of Human Services (TDHS) if the client's concerns cannot be resolved by the agency.

The grievance policy and applicable procedures must be explained to each client or their representative:

- at application disposition,
- upon service initiation, and
- upon request.

SSBG applicants/clients have the right to file a grievance for any of the following reasons:

- Denied applications
- Failure to provide an application for adult day services
- Failure to notify the applicant of disposition within fifteen (15) calendar days of application
- Dissatisfaction with provided services

Any applicant/client whose grievance cannot be resolved through internal agency procedures must be advised of the following rights:

- They may appeal to TDHS within ten (10) calendar days of the outcome of the local process.
- They are entitled to a fair hearing.
- They may authorize legal counsel, a family member, or a friend to represent them.
- They are entitled to information or referral regarding [Tennessee Legal Aid Services](#).

In most cases, a hearing will be scheduled following the submission of an appeal. An impartial Administrative Hearing Official will be assigned to preside over the case, and each party will be served with a Notice of Hearing providing the time, date, and place the hearing will be held. If the hearing is to be conducted over the phone, instructions will be provided. In some cases, a telephonic prehearing conference will be conducted to determine any procedural matters necessary to hold an efficient hearing.

The service provider agency will be requested to submit copies of files and documentation regarding the complaint and what steps have been taken to resolve the issue.

### **TDHS Appeals Process**

Requests for an appeal to TDHS may be made in writing, by phone, by fax, or online. TDHS appeal requests must be submitted to the Clerk's Office, which is a part of the Division of Appeals and Hearings.

- To appeal online go to <https://appealonline.dhs.tn.gov>
- To appeal by phone, call (866) 787-8209 or (800) 270-1349 (TTY).
- To appeal in writing, please use the [hs-3058 Consolidated Appeal Request](#) or the [hs-3058sp Solicitud de Apelacion Consolidada](#). The form can be submitted to:
  - Mail:  
James K. Polk Building  
505 Deaderick Street, 1st Floor  
ATTN: Clerk's Office  
PO Box 198996  
Nashville, TN 37219-8996
  - Fax: (615) 248-7013 or (866) 355-6136
  - Email: [appealsclerksoffice.dhs@tn.gov](mailto:appealsclerksoffice.dhs@tn.gov)

To check the status of an appeal visit: <https://appealonline.dhs.tn.gov/StatusTrackingSearch>.

**Supporting Documents**    [hs-3058 Consolidated Appeal Request](#)  
[hs-3058sp Solicitud de Apelacion Consolidada](#)

**Retention of Records**    Pending

### Definitions/Acronyms

Term	Definition/Acronym
SSBG	Social Services Block Grant
TDHS	Tennessee Department of Human Services

### Supersedes

Social Services Block Grant Policy and Procedures Manual

- Grievance Procedure, Page 17
- Fair Hearing Process, Page 17
- Responsibilities of Local Contract Agencies, Pages 18-19
- State and Federal Requirements, Page 19

### APPROVAL HISTORY

Approved by	Approver Title	Approved Date	Effective Date
Clarence H. Carter	Commissioner	04/27/2021	05/01/2021

### REVISION HISTORY

Date	Version	Location of Change	Description/Reason for Change
04/27/2021	05/01/2021	New Document	New Document