

1. Background

Federal law and regulations require procedures for handling complaints alleging violation of WIOA Title 1, Wagner-Peyser (including TAA), and Non-Discrimination laws (attached). The complexity of these procedures, and the resulting silos, may prevent partners from assisting all customers who have service delivery or customer service related concerns before they rise to the level of a formal, written complaint. The lack of standard expectations for handling concerns limits prompt and informal resolution and may unnecessarily increase the number of formal, written complaints.

This policy provides standard expectations for processing customer concerns and formal complaints. In so doing, it creates distinct definitions of customer “concern” and customer “complaint.” Minimum requirements have been established to create a process for referring complaints to partners located at one-stop center and affiliates for additional processing and resolution.

The oversight responsibility of local workforce development boards is also clarified when dealing with complaints from “other interested parties affected by the local Workforce Investment System, including One-Stop partners and service providers” as described in 20 CFR 683.600(c)(1). The state has determined that allegations concerning WorkSource Center and Affiliate partners that do not fall under the defined program and non-discrimination processes described in the attached WorkSource Complaint Handbook shall be processed as concerns.

2. Policy

The Spokane Workforce Council (SWC) is issuing this policy to provide guidance and standards for assisting customers who express an initial interest in filing a complaint regarding services received through the Spokane WorkSource System.

- a. Oversight of the Concern and Complaint System** – WorkSource Spokane and WorkSource Affiliate sites must provide immediate and consistent processing of any customer complaint to assure its resolution. All WorkSource Center and Affiliate staff must be able to assist customers interested in filing a complaint. WorkSource Spokane and Affiliate sites shall collaborate to establish procedures for the following:
 - i. Designate at least one local complaint coordinator, delegated the responsibility of tracking all local complaints, and notify the SWC of the staff person assigned this responsibility;
 - ii. Establish an expectation that local complaint contacts shall collaborate when complaints present allegations involving multiple partners;
 - iii. Determine informal resolution for customer concerns;
 - iv. Notify all WorkSource system partners, in writing, the contact information of the designated complaint coordinator(s).
 - v. Require that all WorkSource partners provide an assurance that the complaint coordinator will be informed of all local complaints concerning WorkSource Centers and Affiliate Sites, from point of entry to resolution;
 - vi. Include the minimum complaint processing requirements contained in the attached WorkSource Complaint Handbook for WIOA Title 1, Wagner-Peyser, TAA, and Discrimination; and
 - vii. Establish a single system to log, and track to closure, all complaints defined in the WorkSource Complaint Handbook.
- b. Local Customer Concern Resolution** – Concerns must be processed at the local level prior to any state level intervention. The intent is to enable partners to assist customers at the lowest level possible, which will encourage the prompt and informal resolution of concerns.
- c. Complaint Jurisdiction** – All partners located at WorkSource Centers, Affiliates or elsewhere are responsible for the outcomes of complaints that fall within their jurisdiction. Determinations of jurisdiction will be made based on the specific funding stream that supports the function tied to the complaint allegations, not based on associations other than funding sources.

3. Definitions

NOTE: For a complete list of definitions refer to the attached Handbook.

- **Complaint** – The submission of a written and signed allegation that falls under the jurisdiction of WIOA Title 1, Wagner-Peyser, TAA, and/or Non-Discrimination requirements as noted in the WorkSource Complaint Handbook. At a minimum, complaints must contain the following information:
 - Complainant's name;
 - Mailing address, or other means by which the complainant may be contacted;
 - Identification of individual(s) or organizations(s) responsible for the alleged issue;
 - A description of the complainant's allegations, which must include enough details to determine the jurisdiction of the complaint and the date(s) the alleged incident(s) took place; and
 - The complainant's signature and signature date. The signature of his/her authorized representative is also acceptable.
- **Complaint Contact** – The program management or staff designated by program administrators responsible for processing program complaints. WDC Equal Opportunity officers or the State Equal Opportunity Officer may serve as a complaint contact for discrimination complaints. A contact may also be appointed by the One-Stop Operator that initially assists all customers interested in filing a complaint at a local WorkSource office and determines partner(s) program's complaint jurisdiction if a complaint is subsequently filed.
- **Complaint Coordinator** – The WDC designated single point(s) of contact for the WDA or each WorkSource Center and Affiliate Site. The site's Complaint Coordinator is responsible for facilitating the initial process and promoting coordination to resolve all complaints.
- **Concern** – Any verbal expression of dissatisfaction or any written expression of dissatisfaction other than alleged violations of program or non-discrimination rules or laws. Concerns must be referred but do not require the same formal process as a complaint (i.e., logging, tracking, etc.). Local processes may include additional requirements.
- **Efforts to Outcomes (ETO):** a WorkSource system staff-only website used for case management, reporting, and documentation of workforce programs in Washington State.

4. **References**

- SAWDC Policy G105
- ESD WorkSource System Policy 1012 Rev1
- Federal Register – 20 CFR 683 Subpart F
- WIOA Section 181(c)
- WIOA Section 188

Revision History:

#WS803 R2 – August 2018; agency name and logo updated
 #WS803 R2 – August 2017
 #WS803 R1 – March 2014
 #WS803 – June 2011
 Replaced W402 Complaint & Grievance policy