

LASNEM GRIEVANCE POLICY

Purpose

Consistent with 45 CFR Part 1621, the purpose of this grievance procedure is to: 1) help ensure LASNEM provides the highest quality legal assistance to its clients; 2) help ensure LASNEM is accountable to its clients and applicants; 3) provide a procedure to process complaints by applicants about the denial of legal assistance; 4) provide a procedure to process the complaints of clients about the manner or quality of legal assistance provided; 5) make available to clients and applicants a process that will, to the extent possible, provide an effective remedy in the resolution of complaints; and 6) make such procedures available to applicants for, and persons who receive, legal assistance from LASNEM.

Grievance Committee

The LASNEM Executive Director shall establish and maintain a grievance committee, composed of three (3) members of the Board of Directors, including both lawyer and client members in approximately the same proportion in which they are on the Board. The use of the grievance committee shall be utilized as outlined as below.

Complaints by applicants about denial of legal assistance

If an applicant is denied legal assistance by LASNEM, LASNEM shall inform the applicant of the opportunity to complain to, and confer with, a particular LASNEM leadership person who is the designee of the Executive Director verbally or in a written notice mailed to the applicant's last known address. Upon the request of an applicant to the Executive Director's designee to review the applicant's complaint about the denial of legal assistance, the Executive Director's designee shall promptly review the complaint and respond to the applicant complainant. If the Executive Director's designee is not able to resolve the complaint, the designee shall so inform the Executive Director. The Executive Director, in consultation with the designee, shall determine whether it is practical to provide further review of the complaint or submit the complaint to a representative of the LASNEM Board of Directors for further consideration. This procedure is intended, and shall be implemented in a manner, to foster effective communications between LASNEM and the complaining applicant.

Complaints by clients about manner or quality of legal assistance

The LASNEM attorney providing legal assistance to a client, at the time the person is accepted as a client, or as soon thereafter as is practical, shall provide the client with notice of the procedures available to complain, and how to make a complaint, about the manner or quality of legal assistance provided by LASNEM to the client. Upon receiving communication from a client expressing a desire to complain about the manner or quality of legal assistance provided, the LASNEM attorney providing legal assistance to the client, shall promptly inform the client of the opportunity to complain to, and confer with, the designee of the Executive Director about the manner or quality of legal assistance that has been provided by LASNEM to the client. Upon the request of the client complainant to the Executive Director's designee to consider the client's complaint, the Executive Director's designee shall promptly review and respond to the

complaint. If the Executive Director's designee is not able to resolve the client's complaint, the designee shall promptly inform the client complainant that the client may request the Executive Director to review the complaint. Upon the request of the client complainant to the Executive Director to review the complaint, the Executive Director shall promptly review and respond to the complaint. The Executive Director, in consultation with the designee, shall determine whether it is practical to provide further review of the complaint or submit the complaint to a representative of the LASNEM Board of Directors for further consideration. Following the review of the applicant's complaint by the Executive Director's designee, the Executive Director shall have the discretion to determine what, if any, further review should be provided. In the event further review is determined by the Executive Director to be needed, the complaint shall be forwarded to the grievance committee, together with a written or oral statement by the complainant, for further consideration. This procedure is intended, and shall be implemented in a manner, to foster effective communications between LASNEM and the complaining applicant.

The above procedures for resolving client complaints about the manner or quality of legal assistance provided by LASNEM and LASNEM volunteer attorneys are intended, and shall be implemented in a manner, to foster effective communications between LASNEM and the complaining client.

A file containing every complaint about the manner or quality of legal assistance provided by LASNEM or LASNEM volunteer attorneys shall be preserved for examination by LSC. The file shall include any written statement submitted by the complainant or transcribed by the recipient from a complainant's oral statement.

Private Attorney Involvement Program

The LASNEM volunteer program coordinator who places a client with a LASNEM volunteer attorney for legal assistance shall at the time of placement, or as soon thereafter as is practical, provide the client with notice that the client may complain to, and confer with, a particular LASNEM leadership person who is the designee of the Executive Director about the manner or quality of legal assistance provided to the client by the LASNEM volunteer attorney. Upon the request of a client complaining to the Executive Director's designee about the manner or quality of legal assistance provided by a LASNEM volunteer attorney, the Executive Director's designee shall promptly review and respond to the complaint. If the Executive Director's designee is not able to resolve the complaint, the designee shall so inform the Executive Director. The Executive Director, in consultation with the designee, shall determine whether it is practical to provide further review of the complaint or submit the complaint to the grievance committee. The Executive Director shall have the discretion to determine what, if any, further review should be provided. In the event further review is determined by the Executive Director to be needed, the complaint shall be forwarded to the grievance committee, together with a written (or transcribed) statement by the complainant, for further consideration. The procedures for responding to client complaints about the manner or quality of legal assistance provided by a volunteer attorney shall be implemented in a manner consistent with LASNEM'S responsibilities under 45 CFR '1614.3(d)(3) and the Minnesota Rules of Professional Conduct.

Posting and Distribution of Policy

A copy of this policy shall be provided to any person who requests one.

Staff members shall have the responsibility to inform individuals who are clients or potential clients of the grievance procedures regardless of whether the individual requests information about the grievance procedure or indicates a desire to pursue some type of grievance or complaint.