

**St. Louis Arc**  
**GENERAL AGENCY POLICIES & PROCEDURES**

**SECTION: IV                      SUBJECT: COMPLAINT PROCEDURE**  
**POLICY NO.: 4.2**  
**ISSUE DATE: July 26, 1983**  
**REVISED: 1/95, 1/99, 7/01, 11/03, 1/04, 2/08, 11/12, 3/16, 6/20, 4/25**

**1.0     POLICY**

- 1.1     It shall be the policy of the St. Louis Arc that all people and their families and/or guardians have a simple process to submit complaints related to agency decisions and/or violation of rights. Concerns will be addressed promptly and fairly. Submitting a complaint in good faith will not impact a person's ability to access future services.

**2.0     PURPOSE(S)**

- 2.1     The purpose of this policy is to provide a clear, fair, and accessible process for individuals and their families and/or guardians to raise complaints or appeal decisions made by the St. Louis Arc. This policy will also reference the appropriate internal procedures for staff to follow in order to address the complaint.

**3.0     APPLICABLE PROGRAM(S)**

- 3.1     All St. Louis Arc programs

**4.0     RESPONSIBLE PARTY(IES)**

- 4.1     Department Director or designee
- 4.2     Department Vice President
- 4.3     President/CEO
- 4.4     Due Process Committee
- 4.5     Individual
- 4.6     Family
- 4.7     Guardian

**5.0     DEFINITION(S)**

- 5.1     Complaint – any concern or dissatisfaction raised regarding the services, treatment, or any aspect of their experience with St. Louis Arc services
- 5.2     Grievance—allegation that an individual's right has been violated. This does not include a complaint of neglect or abuse (see Policy 4.3 – Abuse and Neglect)

- 5.3 Family—the word “family” used throughout this policy is inclusive of natural and/or adoptive parents, brothers, sisters, and other family members actively involved with a person in any Arc program.
- 5.4 Guardian—A person appointed by the court to care for and have the custody of a minor or of an incapacitated person (incapacitated person is the legal term used in guardianship information.)

## **6.0 PROCEDURE(S)**

- 6.1 If a person and/or their family/guardian have a complaint related to agency decisions, their rights (grievances), mistreatment, or other concerns, they should take the following steps:
  - 6.1.1 Step 1: first try to resolve it informally by communicating with the staff member or manager involved.
    - 6.1.1.1 The staff member or manager will attempt to resolve the complaint after gathering information. The staff will also notify their Director.
  - 6.1.2 Step 2: if not resolved, they may file a formal complaint through the third party Syntrio Reporting System. This may be done in the following ways:
    - 6.1.2.1 Visit <https://www.lighthouse-services.com/slarc> The website is available in English and Spanish.
    - 6.1.2.2 Call 833-950-4516 to speak to someone at Syntrio. There are English and Spanish speakers available.
    - 6.1.2.3 The St. Louis Arc will actively offer and provide assistance with completing the online form or calling. The person may choose an advocate or the Arc will assign a staff not associated with the department related to the complaint. They will ensure the privacy of information learned and only share/submit information as guided by the person with a complaint. Translation services may be used as needed. A printable version of the Complaint Form is available to staff on ArcConnect.
  - 6.1.3 Step 3: Submit the complaint through the online form or by speaking to someone on the phone. The person may include their contact information or choose to be anonymous.
- 6.2 The complaint will be received by the St. Louis Arc’s Human Resources and Quality Enhancement teams.
- 6.3 A representative from one of these teams will be designated as the investigator to review the complaint and gather additional information.
- 6.4 The investigator will follow the appropriate procedures based on the type of complaint, as outlined in Internal Complaint Procedures.
- 6.5 The investigator will provide recommendations to the President/CEO within ten (10) business

days of receiving the complaint.

- 6.6 The President/CEO will make a decision regarding the recommendations within ten (10) business days of receiving them from the investigator.
- 6.7 The decision of the President/CEO is final and will be shared with the individual/family/guardian.
- 6.8 At any time, the person may also file the complaint by contacting the Department of Mental Health's Office of Constituent Services at 1-800-364-9687, and may access legal support from organizations such as Missouri Bar Lawyer Referral Service, Legal Services of Eastern Missouri or Missouri Protection and Advocacy Services.
- 6.9 This policy will be reviewed with the person and family/guardian upon intake and annually thereafter, along with the Notification of Individual's Rights and Responsibilities.

## **7.0 FORMS**

- 7.1 Internal Complaint Procedures
- 7.2 Complaint Form for Syntrio

## **8.0 APPROVAL**

- 8.1 Reviewed and approved by the Executive Staff and President/CEO on October 8, 2008.
- 8.2 Reviewed and approved by the Executive Committee of the St. Louis Arc Board of Directors on October 28, 2008.
- 8.3 Reviewed and approved by the Executive Staff and President/CEO on December 7, 2012.
- 8.4 Reviewed and approved by the Executive Committee of the St. Louis Arc Board of Directors on January 29, 2013.
- 8.5 Reviewed and approved by the Executive Committee of the St. Louis Arc Board of Directors on October 28, 2014.
- 8.6 Reviewed and approved by the St. Louis Arc Board of Directors on October 24, 2017.
- 8.7 Reviewed and approved by the St. Louis Arc Board of Directors on October 22, 2019.
- 8.8 Reviewed and approved by the Executive Committee of the St. Louis Arc Board of Directors on August 25, 2020.
- 8.9 Reviewed and approved by the Executive Committee of the St. Louis Arc Board of Directors on June 22, 2021.
- 8.10 Reviewed and approved by the Executive Staff and President/CEO of the St. Louis Arc on April 5, 2023.
- 8.11 Reviewed and approved by the St. Louis Arc Board of Directors on April 29, 2025.