

# NAMI-NYC

## Participant Grievance Policy

**PURPOSE:** The purpose of this policy is to establish guidelines within the NAMI-NYC program to ensure staff manage and investigate grievances received from participants and/or their family members, caregivers or supports and work toward resolution.

The person-centered structure of NAMI-NYC's program allows for its program participants to openly express their views. The Participant Grievance Process enables consumers, parents, family members, and caregivers to exercise their ability to voice a grievance or complaint about services or activities, including being denied acceptance into the program, termination from the program, or any other aspect of its operations or management. It allows participants to bring these grievances or any other questions to the staff of NAMI-NYC. The Participant Grievance Process also provides for a timely review and resolution of complaints.

### **DEFINITIONS:**

1. **Participant:** is any individual who has received a service from NAMI-NYC or has had one or more contacts with NAMI-NYC related to programs offered.
2. **Complaint-** is a dissatisfaction expressed in writing by the participant, participant's family member, caregiver, or other support (e.g. service provider) related to the provision of services at NAMI-NYC.

### **POLICY:**

1. NAMI-NYC has procedures in place to assure that participants are informed of their right to file a complaint and the process for doing so.
2. Complaints received from/on behalf of participants regardless of mode of submission (e.g. mail, email, phone, fax, etc.) must be reviewed timely.
3. NAMI- NYC leadership staff must investigate complaints received including follow up with the participant or complaint source to discuss the complaint and gather additional information.
4. NAMI-NYC leadership staff must complete their internal investigation within the expected timeframe of three (3) weeks from the receipt of the initial complaint.
5. NAMI-NYC leadership staff notify the participant of the outcome of the investigation.

**PROCEDURE:** The Participant Grievance Process works as follows:

1. If a participant has a grievance, they should raise it with the program Coordinator at NAMI-NYC. The Coordinator will follow up to investigate the grievance and make best efforts to resolve the matter. If the participant is not comfortable addressing the concern directly with the program Coordinator, they may elect to escalate the grievance as outlined below.
2. The participant can notify the Manager of the Department and/or the Associate Executive Director of the grievance. If neither of these individuals is able to resolve the grievance, he/she may present the grievance to the Executive Director.
3. A plan to address the grievance will be developed within three (3) weeks by the Manager of the department in consultation with the Associate Executive Director. If the grievance is received by the Associate Executive Director, they will develop a plan in consultation with the Department Manager.
4. The participant will be given a written response addressing the grievance via email or mail.
5. If the participant is not satisfied with NAMI-NYC's decision and wishes to carry the grievance further, they have the option of contacting the regional mental health government offices, specifically, the NYC DOHMH Office of Consumer Affairs, at 212-219-5393.

**PARTICIPANT GRIEVANCE DOCUMENTATION:**

NAMI-NYC thoroughly documents all participant grievances.

A. Participant grievance documentation includes:

1. Date of the complaint
2. Name of the participant
3. Nature of the complaint
4. Description of the disposition
5. Date of the disposition
6. Date participant is informed of the disposition and participant's response to the disposition.

B. Participant grievance documentation shall also include evidence that the grievance review process is timely and efficient.