

**A Grievance is an expression of dissatisfaction with Medicaid and/or publicly funded inpatient or outpatient services.**

### HOW TO ADDRESS CONCERNS OR GRIEVANCES

- Directly with your provider
- Directly with your managed care organization
- Directly with your administrative services organization
- Ask your Ombuds for assistance
- Sign required paperwork to authorize Ombuds or another party to represent you in the grievance

An **APPEAL** is a request for reconsideration about a denial, reduction, suspension or termination of services based on a **notice of adverse benefit determination** sent by your managed care organization or administrative services organization.

### HOW TO FILE A GRIEVANCE

To file a grievance or appeal with the managed care organization, please contact:

Amerigroup	1-800-600-4441
Molina Healthcare	1-800-869-7165
United Healthcare	1-877-542-8997
Coordinated Care	1-877-644-4613
BH-ASO	1-360-763-5828
TM Ombuds	1-360-763-5793

### WHAT IS A MENTAL HEALTH ADVANCE DIRECTIVE?

A Mental Health Advance Directive is a binding legal document that allows you to make decisions and express your wishes about your mental health treatment in advance, including medications, short term admission to inpatient treatment and other issues. It also provides an opportunity, if you choose, to appoint an 'agent' to make treatment decisions for you and specifies which decisions and in what way.

The Ombuds is functionally independent from the managed care organizations, the administrative services organization or any of their provider agencies. However, the Ombuds functions under the geographic jurisdiction of Thurston and Mason Counties and performs duties in accordance with State law.

### HOW CAN I CONTACT THE BEHAVIORAL HEALTH OMBUDS?

Office: 360-763-5793 or 800-658-4105  
 Cell: 360-280-7656  
 TTY: 7-1-1 or 1-800-833-6388  
 Mailing: Thurston-Mason Administrative Services Organization  
 Address: Attn: The Ombuds  
 612 Woodland Square Loop SE  
 Suite 401  
 Lacey, WA 98503  
 E-mail: theOmbuds@tmbho.org  
 Website: www.tmbhaso.org

Please contact for an appointment or call. The Ombuds is not able to assist walk-ins at the above location.

Your rights as a behavioral health client can be found under WAC 246-341-0600.

## THURSTON-MASON BEHAVIORAL HEALTH OMBUDS

A Behavioral Health Ombuds is available to assist clients of Medicaid and/or publicly funded Mental Health and Substance Use Disorder services in Thurston and Mason Counties to:

- Resolve concerns and grievances
- Provide information and referral
- Assist with Mental Health Advance Directives
- Assist with Appeal and Administrative Hearings pertaining to their behavioral health services

*\*Quickly*

*\*Confidentially*

*\*Free of charge*



## WHAT IS THE THURSTON-MASON BEHAVIORAL HEALTH OMBUDS SERVICE?

The State of Washington has established an independent Ombuds service to receive inquiries, comments, grievances and concerns, appeals, and assist with preparing a *Mental Health Advance Directive*. The Ombuds serves mental health and substance use disorder clients whose services are Medicaid and/or publicly funded. Contact can be initiated by clients, their family members or other interested parties. The Ombuds will determine how to proceed with an issue based on Washington State and Federal laws.

## WHAT IS THE PURPOSE OF THIS SERVICE?

The service is designed to resolve issues quickly, confidentially, impartially and in the best possible way. The Ombuds receives information concerning the quality of service and client satisfaction from you, the client. The Ombuds' primary goal is to help providers, clients, Managed Care Organizations and your Administrative Service Organization work together to ensure dignified, quality service and to assure that client rights are protected.

**Residents of Thurston and Mason Counties who are eligible to receive or are receiving Medicaid and/or publicly funded mental health and substance use disorder services may use the Ombuds service.**

## WHAT THE OMBUDS CAN Do

- Listen to your problem.
- Address all issues according to Washington State and Federal Laws.
- Analyze what is involved and help you determine an appropriate solution.
- Assure that your concerns are heard in the way in which you want them heard, clearly and without judgment.
- Explain and investigate facts, laws, policies and procedures.
- Advocate for your behavioral health treatment choices and rights.
- Mediate to resolve the problem consistent with Washington State law.
- Assist in resolution of a grievance on behalf of a consumer receiving Medicaid and/or publicly funded behavioral health services until the matter is resolved, if authorized by the consumer.
- Assist with the appeal process to address Adverse Benefit Determination of a denial, termination, suspension or reduction of services.
- Assist family and community members in addressing issues with Medicaid and/or publicly funded behavioral health services.
- Assist with Administrative Hearings.
- Provide information and referral on resources and your rights.
- Remain in contact with you to see that you are kept informed until the issue or grievance is resolved.
- Recommend changes to correct a problem or prevent future occurrences.
- Maintain your confidentiality.
- Act as an Authorized Representative in clients' behalf in grievances and appeals if requested and legally authorized.

## WHAT THE OMBUDS CANNOT Do

- Provide counseling, substance use disorder treatment, or other therapeutic services.
- Insist that a Medicaid and/or publicly funded provider agency provide case management or other services, if not deemed medically necessary.
- Provide case management services directly. However, the Ombuds **CAN** assist in providing information and referral or assist with a grievance that may help a consumer get his or her case management needs met.
- Use your name without consent.
- Provide medical opinion and/or make a recommendation for a particular medication. However, the Ombuds **CAN** assist you in the request for a second opinion.
- Enforce a recommendation or ensure any specific outcome. However, the Ombuds **CAN** make a recommendation to a provider agency or the managed care organization or administrative service organization directly.
- Give legal advice or act as your attorney.

