

CITY OF OIL CITY

SECTION 504 GRIEVANCE PROCESS

The following is an overview of how the City of Oil City processes Grievances filed by individuals who have experienced disability discrimination under the law called Section 504. Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act protects you from discrimination in federally funded programs for which you qualify, and is commonly called "Section 504."

This document can be provided in a format accessible to persons with limited access, disabilities an/or persons with limited English proficiency upon request. The City of Oil City prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, color, national origin, religion, sex, familial status, disability or age.

What is a Grievance?

A grievance is a complaint on the basis of disability and in some way asking for the City of Oil City's assistance in resolving the problem. It may be submitted in writing or by using the online Grievance Form. The Grievance should contain:

- Complainants' name and address;
- Name and address of the individual, department or organization (City of Oil City sub-recipient of federal assistance) alleged to have discriminated (the "recipient"); and
- Description of the discriminatory actions and the date of those actions,
- Sufficient data to substantiate any claims or charges. If possible, supporting documentation should be included.
- If desired, a complainant may propose a solution or remedy to the problem.

The Grievance may be amended at any time to clarify or amplify the allegation. Although a Grievance will contain the name of the complainant, the City of Oil City will keep that identity confidential unless it has written authorization from the complainant to release it or except as necessary to carry out the purpose of the Section 504 regulations, including the enforcement provisions.

When Must a Grievance be file?

Under Section 504, a Grievance should be filed within a reasonable time after the complainant becomes aware of the action alleged to be prohibited. All Grievances must be filed within 180 days of the alleged act of discrimination unless the City of Oil City waives this time limit for good cause shown. The Grievance is deemed received on the date the City of Oil City actually receives it or, if mailed, on the date it is postmarked.

Who May File a Grievance?

Any individual who believes he or she has been discriminated against on the basis of disability by a recipient of Federal financial assistance, his or her representative, or a member of a class of persons so situated, or the authorized representative of a member of that class.

Who is an Individual with Disabilities?

An individual with disabilities is any person who has a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities; has a record of such impairment; or is regarded as having such an impairment.

Where May a Grievance be Filed?

- A Grievance may be filed by mail or in person to the City of Oil City, **Attention Rick Cook**, Section 504 Coordinator, 21 Seneca Street, Oil City, PA 16301. Contact Rick Cook at (814) 678-3016.
- A Grievance may also be filed by email at rcook@oilcity.org.

A Grievance form may be found at www.oilcity.org.

Notification to Parties

Within ten (10) days of receipt, the City of Oil City will notify the complainant and the recipient that it has received the Grievance.

Notification of the Parties and the Recipient's Opportunity to Respond

Once the Grievance has been accepted, the Section 504 Coordinator for the City of Oil City will notify the complainant and the recipient of its acceptance. The Section 504 Coordinator will also notify the recipient of the allegations and provide an opportunity for a written response to the allegations within thirty (30) days of receiving the notice. Like the Grievance, the recipient's response may be amended for good cause at any time.

Voluntary Resolution of the Issues

During investigation of the Grievance, the Section 504 Coordinator will make every effort to define all of the issues contained in the Grievance. Throughout the Grievance process, the Section 504 Coordinator will encourage a voluntary resolution of the matter, and will assist the parties in resolving the Grievance through informal resolution. A matter may be resolved by informal means at any time.

The Investigation and Determination

Within ninety (90) calendar days after receiving the Grievance, the Section 504 Coordinator must investigate the incident and issue a finding of whether or not discrimination was found. The Section 504 Coordinator will request all of the information that the City of Oil City believes is necessary in order to fully investigate the issues in the Grievance. The Grievance investigation will involve interviews and meetings with the parties, including any witnesses or other persons identified as having some involvement in the issues of the Grievance. The Section 504 Coordinator may also conduct on-site reviews of facilities that are under the recipient's oversight, if these facilities are part of the Grievance. Once the Grievance investigation is completed, the Section 504 Coordinator will compile all of its findings and shall issue a written determination.

Appeal Procedure

The grievant is not precluded from filing formal complaints at any time during or after the grievance process with the following state or federal agencies:

- **PA Human Relations Commission**
Pittsburgh Regional Office
301 Fifth Avenue
Suite 390, Platt Place
Pittsburgh PA 15222
(412) 565-5395, or 412-565-5711 TTY users only
- **U.S. Department of Justice**
1950 Pennsylvania Avenue
Washington, D.C. 20530

**CITY OF OIL CITY
SECTION 504 GRIEVANCE FORM**

Grievance Information

Your Name: _____

Your Address: _____

City, State, Zip Code: _____

Daytime Phone: _____ Evening Phone: _____

Other Contact Information

Who else can we call if we cannot reach you? _____

Daytime Phone: _____ Evening Phone: _____

Grievance

1. **What** happened to you? How were you discriminated against? State briefly what happened.

2. **Why** do you believe you are being discriminated against?

3. **Who** do you believe discriminated against you?

Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____

City of Oil City Section 504 Grievance Form 2

Please note: If this is a housing-related grievance, it is a violation of the law to deny you your housing rights for any of the following factors: age, race, color, religion, sex, national origin, familial status (families with children under 18), or disability. Sufficient data should be included to substantiate any claims or charges. Additional supporting documentation may be attached.

4. **Where** did the alleged act of discrimination occur?

Address: _____

City, State, Zip Code: _____

5. **When** did the last act of discrimination occur?

Enter the date (mm/dd/yyyy) _____

Is the alleged discrimination continuous or ongoing? Yes No

6. Is there any solution you believe may remedy the problem?

Signature

Date

Send this form to:

City of Oil City
Rick Cook, Section 504 Coordinator
21 Seneca Street
Oil City, Pa 16301

Phone: (814) 678-3016
Email: rcook@olcity.org
Website: www.oilcity.org