



**Kern County Public Health  
California Children's Services (CCS)  
Grievance Policy and Procedure**

*Grounded in Health*

**Purpose:** To provide a local process to ensure that CCS beneficiaries and/or representatives understand how to file a grievance with the program, as required by the Department of Healthcare Services.

The purpose of this grievance procedure is to:

1. Address concerns or complaints at the supervisor level.
2. Provide an orderly procedure to handle the grievance through each level of supervision.
3. Correct, if possible, the cause of the grievance to prevent future complaints.
4. Promote harmonious relations among CCS beneficiaries and/or representatives, CCS staff, CCS supervisors, and Departmental administrators.
5. Ensure fair and equitable treatment of all CCS beneficiaries and/or representatives.
6. Resolve grievances at the Departmental level before appealing to higher levels.

**Reference:** [20231006-CCSNL-GrievanceNL-Flowchart \(ca.gov\)](#)

## Application

The following process applies to CCS beneficiaries and/or representative's complaints which include, but are not limited to, the quality of care or services provided by the Kern County CCS program related to the CCS program's roles and responsibilities.

## Definitions

1. **Addressed:** Acknowledged or resolved.
2. **Appeal:** A request for the Department of Healthcare Services (DHCS) to review a decision made by Kern County CCS when the CCS beneficiary and/or representative disagrees with the decision. Pursuant to Cal. Code Regs. title 22 sections [42140](#) and [42160](#).
3. **Complaint:** A Complaint is the same as a grievance.
4. **Grievance:** A formal expression of dissatisfaction about matters related to Kern County CCS program's roles and responsibilities except events identified in [Cal. Code Regs., tit. 22, section 42140](#) and identified in a CCS Notice of Action including, but is not limited to, denial, reduction, termination or change in services or eligibility. Grievances may include, but are not limited to, the quality of care or services provided by the county CCS program related to the CCS program's roles and responsibilities.
  - a. **Informal Grievance:** A concern or complaint mentioned in passing or that can be rectified immediately by the employee or their immediate supervisor that then results in satisfaction of the CCS Representative, as evidenced by no formal grievance filed, will NOT be considered a Formal Grievance. Since this is not considered a Formal Grievance, the Grievance Form and log do not need to be completed.

- b. Formal Grievance:** A grievance in which the CCS beneficiary and/or representative goes through the formal grievance process of filing a grievance to establish the Grievance as a formal expression of dissatisfaction. The Grievance Form and Log must be completed.

  - i. Standard Grievance:** Grievance cases that do not involve an imminent and serious threat to the health of the CCS beneficiary. Imminent and serious threats mean those that include, but are not limited to severe pain, potential loss of life, limb, or major bodily function.
  - ii. Expedited Grievance:** Grievance cases that involve an imminent and serious threat to the health of the CCS beneficiary. Imminent and serious threats mean those that include, but are not limited to severe pain, potential loss of life, limb, or major bodily function.

    - 1.** An example of an Expedited Grievance is when a CCS beneficiary and/or representative complains about the delay of processing a Service Authorization Request, in which the delay may cause an imminent and serious threat to the health of the patient, including, but not limited to severe pain, potential loss of life, limb, or major bodily function.
- 5. Grievance Form:** The form allows the CCS beneficiary and/or representative to provide their contact information and describe the grievance in their own words. See exhibit A.
- 6. Inquiry:** A request for information that does not include an expression of dissatisfaction. Inquiries may include but are not limited to questions regarding eligibility, services, or other county CCS program processes.
- 7. Resolved:** The grievance has reached a conclusion (final notification or CCS beneficiary is satisfied with the decision) with respect to the submitted grievance.
- 8. Resolution Exception:** DHCS will allow resolution exceptions in cases where a county CCS program may not be able to resolve specific grievances. These instances should be rare and justified as being outside the county CCS program's purview.
- 9. State Hearing:** An inquiry conducted by the California Department of Social Services by an administrative law judge to resolve a CCS applicant's or beneficiary's denied appeal submitted in accordance with [Cal. Code Regs., tit. 22, section 42180](#). Please refer to the Numbered Letter titled *CCS Program Appeal Process* for more information regarding the appeal and State Hearing process.
- 10. CCS beneficiaries and/or representatives:** includes CCS applicants, beneficiaries, legal guardians, or authorized representative.
- 11. Employee:** Any employee in the classified service of the county, regardless of status.
- 12. Immediate Supervisor:** The person who assigns, reviews, or directs the work of an employee.
- 13. Superior:** The person to whom an immediate supervisor reports.
- 14. Department Head/Appointing Authority:** The officer or employee having charge of the administration of a department.

## Grievance Process

CCS beneficiaries and/or representatives can file a grievance at any time, for any matter, as defined in the grievance definition above. Grievances can be submitted verbally in person or over the telephone; in writing via postal mail, fax transmission or in person; or electronically via the Kern County Public Health website or emailed to the Kern County Public Health Department. Kern County CCS can assist CCS beneficiaries and/or representatives in completing the Grievance Form if requested. All formal grievances will be filed through submission of a completed Grievance Form. For grievances received over the phone or via any other form than the designated Grievance Form, the grievance will be transcribed onto the Grievance Form by Kern County CCS staff. The DHCS Grievance Form is attached to this process and can be found on the Kern County Public Health website. The Kern County CCS program determines if the formal Grievance is standard or expedited.

### How to submit the DHCS Grievance Form:

- In person/Mail: 1800 Mount Vernon Ave. 3<sup>rd</sup> Floor, Bakersfield, CA 93306-3302
- Website: [www.kernpublichealth.com/ccs](http://www.kernpublichealth.com/ccs)
- Email: [Publichealth@kerncounty.com](mailto:Publichealth@kerncounty.com)
- Phone: 661-868-0233
- Fax: 661-321-0481

#### 1. Informal Grievance

- a. Kern County CCS will address informal grievances voiced by CCS beneficiaries and/or representatives with appropriate parties.
- b. The outcome will be provided to the CCS beneficiary and/or representative who filed the grievance.
  - i. If the CCS beneficiaries and/or representatives are satisfied no further action is to be taken.
  - ii. If the CCS beneficiaries and/or representatives are not satisfied, they may file a formal grievance form or choose not to take any further action.

2. **Standard Grievances:** Will be fully addressed in thirty (30) calendar days from the date of receipt of the completed Grievance Form to the appropriate entity ([see below for Grievance Purviews](#))

#### *i.* Acknowledgement:

1. Kern County CCS will provide written acknowledgement emailed/auto reply/postmarked to CCS beneficiaries and/or representatives within five (5) business days of receiving the completed Grievance Form. Letter will include the following:
  - a. Notification that the grievance was received.
  - b. Date of receipt
  - c. Provide the name, telephone number and/or email address of the entity who is responsible for addressing the Grievance

**ii. Resolution:**

1. Kern County CCS will notify CCS beneficiaries and/or representatives in writing of the outcome and status within five (5) business days of the date that the Standard Grievance was resolved.
2. The written resolution will contain a clear and concise explanation of the decision made by the Kern County CCS program.
3. In cases where a grievance is unresolvable, Kern County CCS will provide a detailed explanation in an internal Grievance Log as to the reason(s) the grievance is unable to be resolved. Unresolvable grievances, not within the scope of duties Kern County CCS performs, are exempt from Kern County CCS's responsibility to resolve.

**iii. Delayed Resolution**

1. If the Standard Grievance cannot be resolved within 30 calendar days of the date of receipt, Kern County CCS will notify the CCS beneficiary and/or representative in writing regarding the status of the grievance, including the estimated completion date. The written notification will be postmarked/emailed no later than five (5) business days before the conclusion of the 30-calendar day period.

**b. Expedited Grievances:** Will be addressed within three (3) business days from the date of receipt of the completed Grievance Form to the appropriate entity ([see below for Grievance Purviews](#))

**i. Acknowledgement:**

1. Kern County CCS will attempt to contact the CCS beneficiary and/or representative verbally, or in writing via an electronic source, within one (1) business day of receipt of the completed Grievance Form.

**ii. Resolution:**

1. Expedited Grievances will be addressed within three (3) business days of the date of receipt. If the Expedited Grievance is resolved within three (3) business days of the date of receipt, a reasonable attempt will be made to verbally notify the CCS beneficiary and/or representative within one (1) business day that the grievance was resolved regarding the status and follow-up with a notification in writing.
2. The written notice will be postmarked/emailed within three (3) business days of the date that the Expedited Grievance was resolved.
3. The written resolution will contain a clear and concise explanation of their decision.
4. In cases where a grievance is unresolvable, Kern County CCS will provide a detailed explanation in an internal Grievance Log as to the reason(s) the

grievance is unable to be resolved. Unresolvable grievances, not within the scope of duties Kern County CCS performs, are exempt from Kern County CCS's responsibility to resolve.

**iii. Delayed Resolution**

1. If the Expedited Grievance cannot be resolved within three (3) business days of the date of receipt, the CCS beneficiary and/or representative will be notified verbally regarding the status of the Expedited Grievance, including the estimated time of completion and a follow-up in writing.
  - a. The written notice will be postmarked/emailed no later than one (1) business day after the oral communication occurred.

Time limits are established to settle grievances quickly. Time limits may be extended by agreement of the parties. If the grievant is not satisfied with the decision rendered, it is the grievant's responsibility to initiate the action which submits the grievance to the next level of review within the time limits specified in this document under Formal Grievance Procedure. Failure of the CCS beneficiaries and/or representatives to submit the grievance within the time limits imposed terminates the grievance process, and the matter shall be considered resolved. Failure of Kern County CCS to respond within the time limits specified in this document under Formal Grievance Procedure will allow the grievant to submit the grievance to the next higher step of the grievance procedure.

**Resolution Exceptions:**

The goal is to address all grievances, however, resolution exceptions are permitted in cases where Kern County CCS may not be able to resolve specific grievances. These instances should be rare and justified as being outside Kern County CCS's purview. As soon as it is determined that a grievance is unresolvable, Kern County CCS will submit a completed Grievance Form with justification as to why the grievance cannot be resolved by Kern County CCS to [CCSMonitoring@dhcs.ca.gov](mailto:CCSMonitoring@dhcs.ca.gov). The justification will include the efforts Kern County CCS took to resolve the issue.

**DHCS Grievance Purview:**

If a grievance is submitted to Kern County CCS and the grievance is under DHCS purview, then Kern County CCS will log receipt of the grievance and notate that the grievance was returned to the CCS beneficiary and/or representative to file a grievance to DHCS.

How to File Grievances	Entity	Contact Information
Phone	DHCS	(916) 713-8300
Email	DHCS	CCSMonitoring@dhcs.ca.gov
Mail	DHCS	ISCD Attn: County Compliance Unit 1501 Capitol Ave, MS 4502, PO Box 997437 Sacramento, CA 95899-7437

**Managed Care Plan (MCP) Grievance Purview:**

If a grievance is submitted to Kern County CCS and the grievance is under one of the below MCPs' purviews, Kern County CCS will log receipt of the grievance and notate that the grievance was returned to the CCS beneficiary and/or representative to file a grievance with the appropriate MCP.

**Kaiser Permanente**

<b>How to File Grievances</b>	<b>Entity</b>	<b>Contact Information</b>
Phone	Kaiser Permanente	1-888-987-7247
Web	Kaiser Permanente	<a href="https://healthy.kaiserpermanente.org/support/submit-a-complaint#/tellus">https://healthy.kaiserpermanente.org/support/submit-a-complaint#/tellus</a>

**Anthem Blue Cross**

<b>How to File Grievances</b>	<b>Entity</b>	<b>Contact Information</b>
Phone	Anthem	1-800-365-0609 Hearing and Speech Impaired 1-866-333-4823
Web	Anthem	<a href="https://www.anthem.com/ca/individual-and-family/complaints-grievances">https://www.anthem.com/ca/individual-and-family/complaints-grievances</a>
Mail	Anthem	Grievances and Appeals, P.O. Box 4310, Woodland Hills, CA 91365-4310.

**Kern Family Health Care**

<b>How to File Grievances</b>	<b>Entity</b>	<b>Contact Information</b>
Phone	KFHC	Call 661.632.1590 (Bakersfield) or 800.391.2000 (outside of Bakersfield).
Web	KFHC	<a href="https://www.kernfamilyhealthcare.com/members/grievance-form/">https://www.kernfamilyhealthcare.com/members/grievance-form/</a>
Mail	KFHC	Attn: Grievance Coordinator Kern Family Health Care 2900 Buck Owens Blvd. Bakersfield, CA 93308

**Administrative Process**

Kern County CCS will maintain records of grievances and submit quarterly grievance logs to DHCS starting July 1, 2025. The grievance log submission dates are as follows:

<b>Quarter</b>	<b>Grievance Log Due Date*</b>
Q1: July, August, September	November 15
Q2: October, November, December	February 15
Q3: January, February March	May 15
Q4: April, May, June	August 15