



## **CIVIL RIGHTS COMPLIANCE POLICY**

### **PURPOSE**

The County of Winnebago, Illinois (County) is committed to prohibiting discrimination, in the delivery of services and in employment by the County and any grantees or clients. The County has a legal and contractual obligation to provide employment and grant-funded services in a discrimination-free manner and to comply with Federal and State of Illinois non-discrimination laws. Accordingly, this document establishes the policy and procedure for the County to follow regarding civil rights compliance.

The County shall notify County employees of this policy by posting it on its website or providing hard copies upon request. The County shall also require all clients or grantees to notify employees and program participants of this policy.

### **RIGHTS OF CLIENTS AND GRANTEEES**

\*For the purposes of this document, “client” is defined as people who receive services provided by the County or its grantees.

- Be treated with respect, dignity and courtesy regardless of race, color, gender, national origin, religion, ancestry, age, order of protection status, physical or mental disability, pregnancy, marital status, military discharge status, sexual orientation, genetic information, citizenship or other factors prohibited by state and federal law;
- Participate in programs and activities provided by entities funded (in whole or in part) with federal funds regardless of race, color, national origin, sex, religion, disability, and age. In addition, individuals participating in programs provided by entities funded (in whole or in part) pursuant to the Violence Against Women Act have the right to participate in programs and activities regardless of sexual orientation, and gender identity;
- Have the right to privacy and confidentiality protected, within the limits imposed by the law and duty of care;
- Have fair and equal access to County services, including but not limited to the use of an interpreter if needed;
- Receive services that comply with appropriate standards of professionalism, competency and accountability;
- Access personal records by request, in accordance with the *Privacy Act 1988* and the *Freedom of Information Act 1982*; and
- Know how to file any grievance or complaint alleging discrimination and civil rights violations.

### **RESPONSIBILITIES OF CLIENTS AND GRANTEEES**

- Respect the rights of other clients and County staff, including that of privacy and confidentiality;
- Respect County property;
- Attend appointments/meetings, if required, and advise the appropriate County staff as soon as possible if you are unable to attend; and
- Inform the appropriate staff immediately if they have any concerns or problems.

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## **PROTECTING YOUR CONFIDENTIALITY AND PRIVACY**

The County is committed to preserving and upholding all rights to confidentiality and privacy. County records are stored securely and every effort is made to ensure personal information and contact with the County are confidential.

Client or grantee information will not be released to external parties without the appropriate consent, unless there are exceptional circumstances where information may have to be released in accordance with the law.

## **GRIEVANCE/COMPLAINT PROCEDURE**

Any grantee or client who believes he or she has been subjected to discrimination on the basis of any of the aforementioned classes, may file a grievance or complaint with one or more of the entities listed below.

Grievances or complaints must be submitted to the County's Civil Rights Coordinator within one hundred eighty (180) days or one (1) year, as determined by the relevant statutory violation, of the alleged discriminatory conduct.

If a County employee believes he or she has been subjected to discrimination, in any term or condition of employment, including but not limited to hiring, selection, promotion, transfer, pay, tenure, discharge, or discharge, on the basis of any of the aforementioned classes, he or she may file a complaint in accordance with the County's Discrimination/Harassment Policy (Policy number 62-14). A copy of the policy can be obtained on the County's website or from the County's Human Resources Department. The County employee may also file a complaint directly with one or more of the entities listed below.

The filing of a complaint with the County does not supersede or supplant of any other remedies available at law to the aggrieved party. It is against the law for the County to retaliate against anyone who files a grievance or cooperates in the investigation of a grievance or complaint.

The County will make appropriate arrangements to ensure persons are provided reasonable accommodations, if needed, to participate in this grievance process. Such arrangements may include, but are not limited to, providing interpreters for the deaf, providing taped cassettes of material for the blind, or assuring a barrier-free location for the proceedings. The Civil Rights Coordinator will be responsible for such arrangements.

***If you believe you have been the subject of discrimination by the County of Winnebago, Illinois, you may:***

File a written complaint, in-person, by mail, email, or website, to any or all of the following entities:

### **COUNTY OF WINNEBAGO, ILLINOIS**

Attn: Civil Rights Coordinator  
404 Elm Street, 5<sup>th</sup> floor  
Rockford, IL 61101  
(815) 319-4225

Email: [CRCCompliance@hr.wincoil.gov](mailto:CRCCompliance@hr.wincoil.gov)

Website: [wincoil.gov](http://wincoil.gov)

### **DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE, OFFICE OF JUSTICE PROGRAMS, OFFICE OF CIVIL RIGHTS (OCR)**

810 Seventh Street N.W.  
Washington, DC 20531  
800-368-1019 TDD: 800-537-7697

Email: [AskOCR@usdoj.gov](mailto:AskOCR@usdoj.gov)

Website: <https://www.ojp.gov/program/civil-rights-office/filing-civil-rights-complaint>

## **CIVIL RIGHTS COMPLIANCE POLICY**

### **ILLINOIS DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN RIGHTS (IDHR)**

(312) 814-6200 Chicago  
(866) 740-3953 TTY Chicago  
(217) 785-5100 Springfield  
(866) 740-3953 TTY Springfield  
Website: <https://hrc.illinois.gov/>

### **ILLINOIS HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION**

(312) 814-6269 Chicago  
(312) 814-4760 TTY Chicago  
(217) 785-4350 Springfield  
(217) 557-1500 TTY Springfield  
Email: <https://www2.illinois.gov/dhr/FilingCharge/Pages/default.aspx>

### **EQUAL EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY COMMISSION (EEOC)**

(800) 669-4000 Chicago  
(312) 869-8001 TTY Chicago  
(844) 234-5122 ASL video  
Email: <https://www.eeoc.gov/employees/howtofile.cfm>

### **U.S. DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE**

Civil Rights Division  
950 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W.  
Office of the Assistant Attorney General, Main  
Washington, D.C. 20530  
(202) 514-3847  
Telephone Device for the Deaf  
TTY/TDD: 711

### **ILLINOIS CRIMINAL JUSTICE INFORMATION AUTHORITY (ICJIA)**

Attn: Civil Rights Officer  
60 East Van Buren Street, 6th Floor  
Chicago, IL 60605  
Email: [CJA.CivilRightsOfficer@illinois.gov](mailto:CJA.CivilRightsOfficer@illinois.gov)

The complaint must include the name and contact information of the complainant, name and contact information of the entity or individual complained, date of the alleged discriminator conduct, and a general description of the discriminatory conduct. Complainants may provide additional documentation or evidence with the complaint. If an oral complaint is submitted to the Civil Rights Coordinator, complainants will be assisted by County staff in completing the appropriate Complaint form.

The Civil Rights Coordinator (or his/her designee) shall conduct an investigation of the complaint. This investigation may be informal, but it must be thorough, affording all interested persons an opportunity to submit evidence relevant to the complaint. The Civil Rights Coordinator will maintain the files and records relating to such grievances.

### **PUBLICATION**

The County will post a copy of this policy on its website, a downloadable complaint form that may be completed manually, and web-based forms that may be completed and filed electronically (via email). Upon request, the County will provide clients or grantees printed copies of the policy for distribution and display at their facilities.

**CIVIL RIGHTS COMPLIANCE POLICY**

I acknowledge that I have personally received a copy of the Winnebago County Civil Rights Compliance Policy.

I am certifying that I have read and understand the policy and that every Winnebago County employee is required to comply with all applicable laws and the Civil Rights Compliance Policy.

I understand that if I have questions or concerns about compliance with laws or this policy, I must promptly direct my questions or concerns to appropriate organization listed within the Civil Rights Compliance Policy or any other organization that would handle such items.

I understand my obligation to promptly report to the organization any violations of this policy that I currently suspect or know of or which I may become aware of in the future, including any violation of the Civil Rights Compliance Policy or applicable laws.

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|---------------------|------|-----------------|------|
| Client Name (PRINT) | Date | Witness (PRINT) | Date |
|---------------------|------|-----------------|------|

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|------------------|------|-------------------|------|
| Client Signature | Date | Witness Signature | Date |
|------------------|------|-------------------|------|