

Kansas Administrative Regulations

Department of Corrections

Article 15.—Grievance Procedure for Inmates

44-15-204. Special procedures for sexual abuse grievances; sexual harassment grievances and grievances alleging retaliation for filing same; reports of sexual abuse or sexual harassment submitted by third parties.

(a) Definitions. For the purpose of this regulation, each of the following terms shall have the meaning specified in this subsection:

(1) "Sexual abuse of an inmate by another inmate" means any of the following acts if the victim does not consent, is coerced into the act by overt or implied threats of violence, or is unable to consent or refuse:

(A) Contact between the penis and the vulva or the penis and the anus, including penetration, however slight;

(B) contact between the mouth and the penis, vulva, or anus;

(C) penetration of the anal or genital opening of another person, however slight, by a hand, finger, or object; or

(D) any other intentional touching, either directly or through the clothing, of the genitalia, anus, groin, breast, inner thigh, or the buttocks of another person, excluding contact incidental to a physical altercation.

(2) "Sexual abuse of an inmate by a staff member, contractor, or volunteer" means any of the following acts, with or without the consent of the inmate:

(A) Contact between the penis and the vulva or the penis and the anus, including penetration, however slight;

(B) contact between the mouth and the penis, vulva, or anus;

(C) contact between the mouth and any body part if the staff member, contractor, or volunteer has the intent to abuse, arouse, or gratify sexual desire;

(D) penetration of the anal or genital opening, however slight, by a hand, finger, or object, that is unrelated to official duties or if the staff member, contractor, or volunteer has the intent to abuse, arouse, or gratify sexual desire;

(E) any other intentional contact, either directly or through the clothing, of or with the genitalia, anus, groin, breast, inner thigh, or the buttocks, that is unrelated to official duties or if the staff member, contractor, or volunteer has the intent to abuse, arouse, or gratify sexual desire;

(F) any attempt, threat, or request by a staff member, contractor, or volunteer to engage in the acts described in paragraphs (a)(2)(A)-(E);

(G) any display by a staff member, contractor, or volunteer of that individual's uncovered genitalia, buttocks, or breast in the presence of an inmate; or

(H) voyeurism by a staff member, contractor, or volunteer.

(3) "Voyeurism by a staff member, contractor, or volunteer" means an invasion of privacy of an inmate by staff for reasons unrelated to official duties, including peering at an inmate who is using a toilet in the inmate's cell to perform bodily functions; requiring an inmate to expose the inmate's buttocks, genitals, or breasts; or taking images of all or part of an inmate's naked body or of an inmate performing bodily functions.

(4) "Sexual harassment" means either of the following:

(A) Repeated and unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, or verbal comments, gestures, or actions of a derogatory or offensive sexual nature by one inmate directed to another; or

(B) repeated verbal comments or gestures of a sexual nature to an inmate by a staff member, contractor, or volunteer, including demeaning references to gender, sexually suggestive or derogatory comments about body or clothing, or obscene language or gestures.

(b) Submission of grievances concerning sexual abuse.

(1) Each inmate submitting a grievance concerning sexual abuse alleged to have already occurred shall state that inmate's intentions by writing "Sexual Abuse Grievance" clearly on the grievance form.

(2) Inmates shall not be required to use any informal grievance process, or to otherwise attempt to resolve with staff, an alleged incident of sexual abuse by a staff member, contractor, or volunteer, or a grievance in which it is alleged that sexual abuse by another inmate or by a staff member, contractor, or volunteer was the result of staff neglect or violation of responsibilities.

(3) Any inmate may submit a grievance to security staff, a unit team member, or administrative personnel in person or by utilizing the inmate internal mail system.

(4) Any inmate who alleges sexual abuse may submit a grievance without submitting it to a staff member who is the subject of the complaint. The grievance shall not be referred to a staff member who is the subject of the complaint.

(c) Warden's response.

(1) Upon receipt of each grievance report form alleging sexual abuse, a serial number shall be assigned by the warden or designee, and the date of receipt shall be indicated on the form by the warden or designee.

(2) Each grievance alleging sexual abuse shall be returned to the inmate, with an answer, within 10 working days from the date of receipt.

(3) Each answer shall contain findings of fact, conclusions drawn, the reasons for those conclusions, and the action taken by the warden. Each answer shall inform the inmate that the inmate may appeal by submitting the appropriate form to the secretary of corrections.

(4) In all cases, the original and one copy of the grievance report shall be returned by the warden to the inmate. The copy shall be retained by the inmate for the inmate's files. The original may be used for appeal to the secretary if the inmate desires. The necessary copies shall be provided by the warden.

(5) A second copy shall be retained by the warden.

(6) Each facility shall maintain a file for grievance reports alleging sexual abuse, with each grievance report indexed by inmate name and coded as a sexual abuse complaint. Grievance report forms shall not be placed in the inmate's institution file.

(7) If no response is received from the warden in the time allowed, any grievance may be sent by an inmate to the secretary of corrections with an explanation of the reason for the delay, if known, with a notation that no response from the warden was received.

(d) Appeal to the secretary of corrections.

(1) If the warden's answer is not satisfactory to the inmate, the inmate may appeal to the secretary's office by indicating on the grievance appeal form exactly what the inmate is displeased with and what action the inmate believes the secretary should take.

(2) The inmate shall send the appeal directly and promptly by U.S. mail to the department of corrections' central office in Topeka.

(3) If an appeal of the warden's decision is made to the secretary, the secretary shall have 20 working days from receipt to return the grievance report form to the inmate with an answer. The answer shall include findings of fact, conclusions made, and actions taken.

(4) If a grievance report form is submitted to the secretary without prior action by the warden, the form may be returned to the warden for further action, at the option of the secretary's designee.

(5) In all cases, a final decision on the merits of any portion of a grievance alleging sexual abuse, or an appeal thereof, shall be issued by the secretary within 90 days of the initial filing of the grievance.

(6) Computation of the 90-day time period shall not include time taken by inmates in preparing and submitting any administrative appeal.

(7) At any level of the administrative process, including the final level, if the inmate does not receive a response within the time allotted for reply, including any properly noticed extension, the inmate may consider the absence of a response to be a denial at that level and may proceed to the next level of appeal.

(8) An appropriate official may be designated by the secretary to prepare the answer.

(e) Imminent sexual abuse.

(1) Each inmate submitting a grievance concerning imminent sexual abuse shall state that inmate's intentions by writing "Emergency Sexual Abuse Grievance" clearly on the grievance form.

(2) Each grievance alleging that an inmate is subject to a substantial risk of imminent sexual abuse shall be treated as an emergency grievance under K.A.R. 44-15-106.

(3) After receiving an emergency grievance alleging imminent sexual abuse, the warden or designee shall provide an initial response within 48 hours and shall issue a final decision within five calendar days. The initial response and final decision shall document the determination whether the inmate is in substantial risk of imminent sexual abuse and the action taken in response to the emergency grievance.

(f) Submission of grievances concerning sexual harassment or concerning retaliation for submission of a report or grievance concerning sexual abuse or harassment.

(1) Each inmate shall be required to use the informal grievance process specified in K.A.R. 44-15-101 and 44-15-102 for grievances concerning sexual harassment or concerning retaliation for submission of a report or grievance concerning sexual abuse or harassment. These grievances shall otherwise be treated and processed according to the ordinary grievance procedure specified in K.A.R. 44-15-101 and 44-15-102.

(2) Any inmate who alleges sexual harassment or retaliation may submit a grievance without submitting it to a staff member who is the subject of the complaint. The grievance shall not be referred to a staff member who is the subject of the complaint.

(3) Each facility shall maintain a file for grievance reports alleging sexual harassment or retaliation for submission of a report or grievance alleging sexual abuse or harassment, with each grievance report indexed by inmate name and coded accordingly. No grievance report form shall be placed in the inmate's institution file.

(g) Time limits.

(1) There shall be no time limit for submission of a grievance regarding an allegation of sexual abuse.

(2) The time limits for any grievance or portion thereof that does not allege an incident of sexual abuse or imminent sexual abuse shall be the limits specified in K.A.R. 44-15-101b.

(h) Third-party submissions.

(1) Third parties, including fellow inmates, staff members, family members, attorneys, and outside advocates, shall be permitted to assist any inmate in filing requests for administrative remedies relating to allegations of sexual abuse and shall also be permitted to file these requests on behalf of any inmate.

(2) If a third party files such a request on behalf of an inmate, the alleged victim shall agree to have the request filed on behalf of the alleged victim. The alleged victim shall personally pursue any subsequent steps in the administrative remedy process.

(3) If the inmate declines to have the request processed on that individual's behalf, the facility shall document the inmate's decision.

(i) Grievances in bad faith. Any inmate may be disciplined for filing a grievance related to alleged sexual abuse only if it can be demonstrated that the inmate filed the grievance in bad faith. In this instance, a disciplinary report alleging violation of K.A.R. 44-12-303 or 44-12-317, as appropriate, may be issued.

(Authorized by and implementing K.S.A. 2012 Supp. 75-5210 and 75-5251; effective, T-44-6-28-13, June 28, 2013; effective Sept. 27, 2013.)

***** Authenticated Kansas Administrative Regulation *****