



How to File an Ombudsman Complaint from Prison

You must complete the steps below and send us a copy of all your appeal paperwork before your complaint will be opened.

BEFORE YOU APPEAL:

There are people at the prison who can help you if you are having problems. You may contact your institutional probation officer, the law librarian, the facility grievance coordinator, the program counselor or anyone else at the institution you feel comfortable talking with about your problem. You should also review the prisoner handbook located at each prison.

Before you contact the Ombudsman, remember these rules:

Complaints should be filed in writing except for life threatening issues. The Ombudsman provides complaint forms to the prison law library for inmates to use.

The ombudsman cannot review matters that are in court or have been ruled on by a judge. We also do not provide legal assistance.

NOW IT IS UP TO YOU:

- First, you should try to resolve your problem informally. You may file a **REQUEST FOR INFORMATION (RFI)** [formerly known as a cop-out] with DOC staff asking for more information or some other action on this matter. If you are not satisfied with the response, you have the following options:

- You may file a **GRIEVANCE** on your complaint (22 AAC 05.185 and DOC P&P 808.03) with the facility grievance coordinator. Your grievance should clearly state what the problem is and what you want done about it. If you disagree with the answer to your grievance, you should follow the **APPEAL** process up to the superintendent or the director of institutions. Keep copies of all your paperwork. If you disagree with the *final decision* from the Department of Corrections, you may send us a letter explaining why you believe the decision is wrong and enclosing **copies** of all your paperwork concerning the issue for our review.

A prisoner who believes a grievance has not been handled consistent with DOC P&P 808.03 may seek review by the department grievance and compliance administrator after the director of institutions renders a decision. The prisoner may request a review by writing a letter and sending it in a sealed envelope directly to the grievance and compliance administrator within 30 days. The grievance and compliance administrator shall respond in writing to the prisoner within 30 days.

- If your complaint involves a **MEDICAL** matter (22 AAC 05.120-122 and DOC P&P Chapter 807 and 808.03), you may file a **MEDICAL GRIEVANCE** with the facility grievance coordinator or the facility health care officer. Your grievance should clearly state

what the problem is and what you want done about it. If you disagree with the answer to your grievance, you should follow the **APPEAL** process either up to the health care administrator, the medical director, or the medical grievance review committee as applicable. Keep copies of all your paperwork. If you disagree with the **final decision** from the Department of Corrections, you may send us a letter explaining why you believe the decision is wrong and enclosing **copies** of all your paperwork concerning the issue for our review. Keep your original documents.

- If your complaint involves a **CLASSIFICATION** matter (22 AAC 05.200-276 and DOC P&P Chapter 700), you should raise any objections at the classification committee hearing. If you disagree with the committee's decision, you should follow the **APPEAL** process either up to the superintendent, the director of institutions, or the deputy commissioner depending on the type of classification. If you disagree with the **final decision** from the Department of Corrections, you may send us a letter explaining why you believe the decision is wrong and enclosing **copies** of all your paperwork concerning the issue for our review. Keep your original documents.

- If your complaint involves a **SEGREGATION/CLASSIFICATION** matter (22 AAC 05.200-276 and 22 AAC 485-505 and DOC P&P Chapters 700 and 804), you should raise any objections to your segregation at the classification committee hearing. If you disagree with the committee's decision, you should follow the **APPEAL** process either up to the director of institutions or the deputy commissioner depending on the type of classification. If you disagree with the **final decision** from the Department of Corrections, you may send us a letter explaining why you believe the decision is wrong and enclosing **copies** of all your paperwork concerning the issue for our review. Keep your original documents.

- If your complaint involves a **DISCIPLINARY** matter (22 AAC 05.400-480 and DOC P&P Chapter 809), you should first present your position at the disciplinary hearing. If you disagree with the committee's decision, you should follow the **APPEAL** process up to the superintendent, the director of institutions, or the deputy commissioner depending on the disciplinary action. If you disagree with the **final decision** from the Department of Corrections, you may send us a letter explaining why you believe the decision is wrong and enclosing **copies** of all your paperwork concerning the disciplinary issue for our review. Keep your original documents.

Each step discussed above has a deadline set by DOC. You should follow the deadlines.

We try to respond to inmate complaints within two weeks, although sometimes it takes longer. If you have not heard from us after two weeks, feel free to phone our office and inquire about your complaint.

Complaints to the Ombudsman should be mailed to:

Office of the Ombudsman
333 West 4th Avenue, Suite 305
Anchorage AK 99501

In Anchorage call: 269-5290

In Juneau call: 465-4970

REMEMBER

Use the Ombudsman complaint form.

The Ombudsman cannot review matters that are in court and doesn't give legal advice.