

OAKLAND COUNTY FRIEND OF THE COURT

Grievance Procedure

230 Elizabeth Lake Road, Pontiac, Michigan
Mailing Address: P.O. Box 436012, Pontiac, MI 48343-6012

Telephone: (248) 858-0424

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WHEN TO SUBMIT A FRIEND OF THE COURT (FOC) ADMINISTRATIVE GRIEVANCE:

- If you believe that a FOC employee engaged in misconduct or otherwise acted improperly, you may submit a grievance to the FOC Director.
- If you believe that an FOC operation was misapplied or should be changed, you may submit a grievance to the FOC Director.
- You may submit a further grievance to the Chief Judge (CJ) only if you are dissatisfied with the FOC Director's response to your initial grievance.

THE ADMINISTRATIVE GRIEVANCE PROCESS MAY NOT ADDRESS:

- Objections to a FOC investigation or resulting recommendation. *Legal issues may only be addressed through the court system.*
- Objections to a decision by a referee or judge. *Bench officer decisions may only be addressed through the court system.*
- Objections to a statute, court rule, or case law precedent. *Legal issues may only be addressed through the court system.*
- Complaints about a private attorney. *The FOC does not direct or regulate attorneys.*
- Complaints about a judge. *The FOC does not direct or regulate judges.*
- Complaints about other agencies. *The FOC does not direct or regulate other county or state agencies.*

COMPLETING THE GRIEVANCE FORM CAPTION:

- If you do not type your grievance, please write as neatly as possible. *Attaching a written or typed letter that states your concerns and includes all relevant documentation is acceptable.*
- In the caption under "FRIEND OF THE COURT GRIEVANCE," check "Friend of the Court" or "Chief Judge" box. *Do not check the "Chief Judge" box unless you are dissatisfied with the FOC Director's response to your initial grievance.*
- In the caption, provide your full name and address, as well as the full name and address of the other party in your case if known. *Neither the FOC nor a FOC employee should be listed as a "party."*
- In the caption following "This grievance is about," check the "employee(s)" and/or "office operations" box that indicates the nature of your concern(s). *Checking both boxes without an explanation under the "STATEMENT OF GRIEVANCE" section is unproductive and hurts your credibility.*

THE "STATEMENT OF GRIEVANCE" SHOULD INCLUDE:

- Your ten (10) digit court case number. *This will prevent confusion with other cases you might have or other litigants who share your name.*
- A thorough explanation of your concerns with specific dates, names, and what you believe is wrong. *Again, objections to court orders/decisions must be addressed through the court system.*
- The remedy or corrective action you are requesting. *Again, the FOC cannot change the law or the Court's orders.*

THE "STATEMENT OF GRIEVANCE" SHOULD NOT INCLUDE:

- Foul language or personal attacks, such as "name-calling." *These are unproductive and hurt your credibility.*
- Conclusions without any supporting facts. *For instance, do not say that the FOC employee was "rude" or "unprofessional," state what he or she did or said that offended you, and include the names of any witnesses.*

FORMAL RESPONSE FROM THE FOC DIRECTOR:

- The FOC Director will treat your grievance as a "confidential" correspondence and respond in writing within thirty (30) days after receipt. *If more than 30 days is needed to fully respond, the FOC Director must notify you in writing.*
- If you are dissatisfied with the FOC Director's response, then you may resubmit your grievance to the Chief Judge (CJ) of the Circuit Court through the FOC. *The CJ will not respond to any grievance unless the FOC has had an opportunity to respond.*

SUBMISSION OF GRIEVANCE FORM AND ATTACHMENTS:

- Hand-Delivery: 230 Elizabeth Lake Road, Pontiac, Michigan
- U.S. Mail: P.O. Box 436012, Pontiac, MI 48343-6012
- Fax: (248) 858-0461
- Online: https://publicdocs.oakgov.com/Forms/FOC_Grievance

INSTRUCTIONS FOR GRIEVANCE FORM

The friend of the court grievance procedure is to be used if you have a complaint regarding the actions of an employee or office operations of the friend of the court office. **A judge's or referee's decision and an order of the court are not issues to be handled through the grievance procedure.**

A grievance shall first be filed in writing with the friend of the court. If you are not satisfied with the decision of the friend of the court, you may file a further grievance, in writing, with the chief judge.

The friend of the court/chief judge will investigate and respond to your grievance in a reasonable period of time. If the response cannot be given within 30 days, you will be given a reason why the response is not possible within that time.

When filling out this grievance form, you should type or press firmly to ensure all copies are readable. In the alternative, you may photocopy the appropriate number of copies of the completed form. You must also:

1. provide the names and addresses of the parties in the court case. This will assist the friend of the court or chief judge in identifying your case.
2. provide the name of the county where your domestic relations case is located.
3. check the appropriate box for the type of complaint (grievance).
4. state your complaint, providing specific details, dates, names, and other important information.
5. mail or deliver the completed form to the friend of the court or the chief judge's office whichever is appropriate. Keep the last copy (third copy) for your records.