

needs of individual council members, available resources, and applicable restrictions on use of grant funds, including the restrictions in §§51.31(e) and 51.6(e).

EFFECTIVE DATE NOTE: At 62 FR 53564, Oct. 15, 1997, §51.23 was added. This section contains information collection and record-keeping requirements and will not become effective until approval has been given by the Office of Management and Budget.

§51.24 Program priorities.

(a) Program priorities and policies shall be established annually by the governing authority, jointly with the advisory council. Priorities shall specify short-term program goals and objectives, with measurable outcomes, to implement the established priorities. In developing priorities, consideration shall be given to, at a minimum, case selection criteria, the availability of staff and monetary resources, and special problems and cultural barriers faced by individuals with mental illness who are multiply handicapped or who are members of racial or ethnic minorities in obtaining protection of their rights. Systemic and legislative activities shall also be addressed in the development and implementation of program priorities.

(b) Members of the public shall be given an opportunity, on an annual basis, to comment on the priorities established by, and the activities of, the P&A system. Procedures for public comment must provide for notice in a format accessible to individuals with mental illness, including such individuals who are in residential facilities, to family members and representatives of such individuals and to other individuals with disabilities. Procedures for public comment must provide for receipt of comments in writing or in person.

§51.25 Grievance procedure.

(a) The P&A system shall establish procedures to address grievances from:

- (1) Clients or prospective clients of the P&A system to assure that individuals with mental illness have full access to the services of the program; and
- (2) Individuals who have received or are receiving mental health services in the State, family members of such in-

dividuals, or representatives of such individuals or family members to assure that the eligible P&A system is operating in compliance with the Act.

(b) At a minimum, the grievance procedures shall provide for:

(1) An appeal to the governing authority from any final staff review and/or determination; in cases where the governing authority is the director of the P&A system, the final review and/or determination shall be made by a superior of the governing authority, e.g., a supervisor, or by an independent entity, e.g., an appointed board or committee.

(2) Reports, at least annually, to the governing authority and the advisory council describing the grievances received and processed and their resolution;

(3) Identification of individuals responsible for review;

(4) A timetable to ensure prompt notification concerning the grievance procedure to clients, prospective clients or persons denied representation, and to ensure prompt resolution;

(5) A written response to the grievant; and

(6) Protection of client confidentiality.

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§51.26 Conflicts of interest.

The P&A system must develop appropriate policies and procedures to avoid actual or apparent conflict of interest involving clients, employees, contractors and subcontractors, and members of the governing authority and advisory council, particularly with respect to matters affecting client services, particular contracts and subcontracts, grievance review procedures, reimbursements and expenses, and the employment or termination of staff.

§51.27 Training.

A P&A system shall provide training for program staff, and may also provide training for contractors, governing board and advisory council members to