



## CTF Grievance Guide

Following all of these steps **protects your legal rights**. This process is long and hard, and your requests may not even be answered. But, it is important because prisoners must finish all steps before suing under federal law about prison conditions. If you stop before completing the entire process because you did not receive a response, did not have the proper form, or any other reason, the court may say that you have not “exhausted” your administrative remedies and throw out your case. Don’t take that chance. **Finish the process.**

Be persistent. Follow directions. If you get a response that asks you to submit your paperwork again, attach a staff memo, or add additional copies, do it. Don’t ever give up. Start with Step 1 right away by filing an informal resolution as soon as possible. **Then continue with all the appeals.** Make sure you follow the next step even if you never got a response to the last thing you submitted. If you are late filing your grievance or appeal, turn it in anyway and explain why you are late.

### 1) Fill out Informal Resolution Form

15 days

### 2) Fill out Grievance Form (14-5B Inmate/Resident Grievance Form)

Use blank paper if you cannot get a form

### STEP 1 - INFORMAL RESOLUTION

Within **7 days** of the incident you are grieving, request and fill out **14-5A Informal Resolution Form**. If it is related to medical care and treatment you must submit it through facility mail to the health services staff. Otherwise, you can submit it through facility mail or in person to the appropriate staff unit (**the grievance coordinator**). You can put your grievance in the Grievance box on your unit.

### STEP 2 - FORMAL GRIEVANCE

**If you get a response (to the Informal Resolution) and you disagree with it or it does not fix your problem,**

- File a formal grievance (**14-5B Inmate/Resident Grievance form**) within **5 days** of the response date listed on the Informal Resolution Form.
  - You must attach a copy of the 14-5A you previously turned in.
  - After filling out page 1 of the form, put it in a sealed envelope and put that in the Grievance box.
  - You should get a written response within **15 days**

## OR

If you did not received a response (to the Informal Resolution form) after 15 days,

- You then have **5 more days** to submit the **14-5B Inmate/Resident Grievance** form.
  - You must attach a copy of the 14-5A you previously submitted.
  - After filling out page 1 of the form, put it in sealed envelope and put that in the Grievance box.
  - You should get a written response within **15 days**

## STEP 3 - APPEAL TO THE WARDEN OF CTF

If you get a response (to the Formal Grievance) and you disagree with it or it does not fix your problem,

- You **must** submit an appeal within **5 calendar days**.
  - To file an appeal, fill out the **appeal section of the 14-5B form** and resubmit the grievance.

Then you should receive a documented response stating the reasons for approval or disapproval **within 15 days**.

## OR

If you did not received a response (to the Formal Grievance) after 15 days,

- Then you have **5 more days** file an **appeal**.
  - To file an appeal, complete the **appeal section of the 14-5B form** and resubmit the grievance.

Then you should receive a documented response stating the reasons for approval or disapproval **within 15 days**.

## STEP 4 - APPEAL TO THE DC DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS CONTRACT MONITOR

If you get a response (from the Warden) and you disagree with it or it does not fix your problem,

File a grievance even if you never received a response!

15 days

3) Appeal by filling out the bottom half (Appeal Section) of your Grievance form

Use blank paper if you cannot get a form

File an appeal even if you never received a response!

4) Appeal to the Contract Monitor on a blank sheet of paper (there is no form)

Make sure you complete this step even if you have never received a response

15 days

5) Appeal to the Director of the D.C. Department of Corrections on a blank sheet of paper (there is no form)

- You must appeal to the Contract Monitor **within 5 days** of receiving the Warden's Decision. Your appeal must have the original grievance and all responses attached to it.

**If you do not receive a response from the Warden after 15 days,**

- If you do not get a response **within 15 days**, you then have **5 days to** appeal to the Contract Monitor. Your appeal must have the original grievance and any responses attached to it. If you never received a response, include that information in the appeal.

### **STEP 5 - APPEAL TO THE DIRECTOR OF THE D.C. DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS**

- If you are not satisfied with the Contract Monitor's response, you should appeal to the Director of the DC Department of Corrections **within 5 days** of receiving the Contract Monitor's decision. Your appeal must have the original grievance and any responses attached to it. If you never received a response, include that information in the appeal.

Remember: Still file this level of appeal even if you never get a response

**Congratulations! This process is now complete and you have preserved your right to file in court.**

This guide was created by the D.C. Prisoners' Project of the Washington Lawyers' Committee for Civil Rights and Urban Affairs in June 2011.  
It is not intended to replace the advice of an attorney. It is not legal advice and does not create an attorney client relationship.  
You are responsible for meeting all necessary deadlines and requirements.