

Hopelink
Customer Complaint Policy
May 2019

Hopelink is committed to providing reliable, safe, and satisfying transportation options for the community. Customers of Hopelink are a fundamental aspect of our business and as such, their feedback is crucial to the growth and development of the agency.

The Hopelink Customer Complaint Policy has been established to ensure that riders of the system have an easy and accessible way to provide feedback to the agency. Hopelink is open to hearing any customer feedback including complaints, comments, suggestions, or concerns.

Contacting Hopelink: Riders can contact Hopelink in the following ways:

1. **US Mail:** Riders can mail or send direct delivery to one of over a dozen separate Hopelink facilities; addresses are included on Hopelink's website. An interoffice delivery system ensures that all Transportation-related mail is promptly delivered to the Transportation facilities in Bellevue.
2. **Feedback Line:** Riders can contact Hopelink toll free at 1-800-923-7433. This line is available 24 hour a day, seven days a week.
3. **E-mail:** Riders can contact Hopelink by e-mail at Ombudsperson@hopelink.org.
4. **Fax:** Riders can send written feedback by fax to 425-644-9956.
5. **Language Line:** For riders who speak a language other than English, Hopelink will utilize the services of the Language Line to facilitate the call.
6. **Website:** Riders can offer feedback on the Hopelink Website.

Feedback Review Process and Acknowledgement: All feedback from customers is valued and will be reviewed by the Ombudsman. While most comments/complaints are filed with Customer Service Specialists in the call center, these may be submitted with any Hopelink staff who are responsible for ensuring that the comment is forwarded to the Transportation Division for processing.

Once a complaint is received in the Transportation Division, the process is simple and straightforward:

1. the comment is logged in a database,
2. the comment is forwarded to a responsible party for response,
3. the response is then reviewed by an independent party, and finally,
4. a response is issued to the customer.

More specifically, Hopelink manages two sets of comment databases, one for Brokerage Operations and one for Direct Operations. In the case of the Brokerage Operations, the

Ombudsman is responsible for reviewing the comment for clarity and sufficiency of information, then forwarding to the responsible party for a response. The responsible party issues a response to the concern; this response is reviewed by the Ombudsperson to ensure the response addresses the clients concerns, including any necessary corrective actions. Disagreements with any decision or a response are escalated to the Director, the COO, and ultimately the agency's CEO for separate review. A client may also choose to request an administrative Fair Hearing with Health Care Authority (HCA) should they not agree with a decision made by Hopelink. These options are included in the response to the customer.

Responses to customers are typically issued within 14 business days of receipt of the comment, or less for high severity complaints. Customer comments are also reviewed by the Ombudsperson and Hopelink's management team for quality control purposes both at individual and aggregate levels.

In the case of Hopelink's Transportation Direct Operations, comments are either received directly from customers or forwarded from King County Metro's Customer Service Center. These are logged in a database and then forwarded to a supervisor for investigation and review. The supervisor responds to the customer directly if a response has been requested. Comments may be escalated to the Director, COO, or CEO at the customer's request. Here also, Hopelink strives for a 14 day response time to customers.

Customer Appeals Process: Any person who is dissatisfied with the response they receive from Hopelink is welcome to appeal the decision. A review team consisting of the General Manager/Director, Hopelink Customer Ombudsman, and one other staff member will review customer appeals.

Information about Policy: Information about the Customer Complaint Policy, including how to submit a complaint, will be made available to riders at the following locations:

- Hopelink's educational material about the Medicaid Brokerage contains the following invitation to customers:

For Complaints, commendations and comments regarding your trip please contact the Hopelink King County reservation line at 800-923-7433, Snohomish County reservation line at 855-766-7433.

These brochures are distributed throughout King and Snohomish counties at medical facilities and available online at Hopelink's website, www.hopelink.org. The brochure is available in English, Spanish, and Russian.

- For services in contract with King County Metro for the King County DART program, customer comment guidelines are established by the Metro transit authority. Printed route schedules on board the bus provide information for contacting Metro's Customer Service department, including their website at <http://metro.kingcounty.gov/cs/services.html>.

- Hopelink's website.

Reporting: The General Manager/Director shall compile a summary of rider responses for the board, staff, and employees for use in reviewing and evaluating service.

Tracking: Hopelink shall maintain a tracking system for all feedback from customers that provides a unique identification of each customer communication and allows ready access to information on the status of the comment at any time.

Protection from Retribution: Customers of Hopelink should be able to submit feedback without fear of retribution from the agency. If a rider feels like they are being treated unfairly in response to the feedback that they provided, they should contact the Hopelink Customer Ombudsman. Hopelink will appropriately discipline any employee that retaliates against a customer.