



**POLITICAL ASYLUM/IMMIGRATION REPRESENTATION PROJECT**  
**98 North Washington Street, Suite 106**  
**Boston, MA 02114**

**Political Asylum/Immigration Representation (PAIR) Project**  
**Client Grievance Procedure**  
**Updated November 2023**

A client who is dissatisfied with the performance of their attorney may register a complaint with PAIR. The complaint should be sent to the PAIR Program Manager who supervises the attorney against whom they are filing a grievance. PAIR has 3 core legal programs, Pro Bono Asylum Program, Detention Program, and the Justice for Immigrant Families Program. Please see [www.pairproject.org](http://www.pairproject.org) for the staff directory for an updated list of Program Managers.

The PAIR Program Manager will accept the complaint and will contact the client who has filed the grievance, the accused attorney, and the PAIR mentor, where it's a pro bono attorney, to gather information and resolve the dispute in an informal manner.

If there is a complaint against a Program Manager, the client should file a grievance directly with the Executive Director. Please see the staff directory for the contact details of PAIR's Executive Director.

If a complaint cannot be resolved informally, the PAIR Program Manager will share the complaint with the Executive Director and HR consultant. The Program Manager will review the information with the Executive Director and HR consultant to consider whether PAIR should continue the client's representation by maintaining the current attorney, reassign the client to another attorney in-house, assign the client to a new pro bono attorney, or terminate its representation of the client. After careful consideration of the complaint, the Program Manager will work with the Executive Director and PAIR's HR consultant, where appropriate, to issue a written decision.

The Executive Director and HR consultant may consider further disciplinary actions stemming from the client's complaint pursuant to state and federal law.

**Request for Review:** If the Program Manager recommends that PAIR **terminate its representation of the client**, the client may request review of this decision. This request should

be done in writing within 30 days of the termination decision.

Grievance Review Committee: When the request for review by a client who has been recommended for termination is received, the Executive Director will form a Grievance Review Committee, which consists of at least 1 PAIR Program Manager who previously has not been involved in the complaint, PAIR's HR consultant, and the Executive Director. The Committee should notify the client who filed the complaint, the attorney who represented the client, PAIR mentor, and the Program Manager, in writing, that they are reviewing the matter and describe the grievance procedure. The Grievance Review Committee will conduct a review, starting with the original complaint, examine notes in the file, solicit written responses from the parties involved (client, attorney, PAIR mentor, and Program Manager), and gather additional information, including supporting letters and any other documents relevant to the matter.

After reviewing the information from all parties, the Grievance Review Committee will hold an informal hearing at which the client who filed the original complaint, the attorney representative, the PAIR mentor may present their views on PAIR's proposed termination its representation of the client. Prior to the hearing, the Grievance Committee will provide the client with a written summary of evidence it has received from them. After this hearing and review of testimony, the Executive Director will communicate the Grievance Review Committee's findings and will either:

-Recommend that PAIR's representation of the client continue and keep the original attorney on the case or assign the case to a new attorney and notifying the client, the former attorney, and the PAIR mentor, in writing, of this decision; or

-Affirm the appropriate PAIR Program Manager's original recommendation that PAIR terminate its representation of the client and notify the client, the attorney, the PAIR mentor, in writing, of the reasons for this decision.

If PAIR continues its representation of the client, the Grievance Committee may:

-Recommend that PAIR retain the original attorney on the *pro bono* representation and notify all parties of the reasons for this decision; or

-PAIR may remove the original attorney from the *pro bono* representation and assign the matter to a new attorney for representation through PAIR.

If the original attorney is terminated from representation, PAIR may remove the attorney from its *pro bono* representation list and, if necessary recommend filing a formal complaint against the attorney with state and federal authorities and the Massachusetts Board of Bar Overseers, in which case the Committee should notify the terminated attorney and the PAIR Board of Directors in writing of the reasons for any disciplinary action. Before acting on a recommendation by the Grievance Committee that PAIR file an official complaint with the Massachusetts Board of Bar Overseers or state and federal authorities, the Board of Directors may allow the terminated attorney an opportunity at a meeting of the Board to present his or her case against the issuance of such a complaint.

Board Review: If the client who filed the original complaint, the attorney representing the client, the PAIR mentor, or the PAIR Program Manager who received the original complaint disagree with the Grievance Committee's decision, they may request that representatives from the Board of Directors review the case. This request should be done in writing within 30 days of the Grievance Committee's termination decision.

When a party requests that the Board of Directors review a decision of the Grievance Committee, except when the Grievance Committee recommends that PAIR file an official complaint against an attorney with the Massachusetts Board of Bar Overseers, the Board may limit its review to the written record compiled by the PAIR Program Manager, Executive Director, and the Grievance Committee. In its discretion, the Board may request further comment in writing from the client, PAIR mentor, or attorney, or may hold an informal hearing on the matter.

If the decision to terminate the client and/or the attorney representative stands, there may be further disciplinary action under state and federal laws, in which case the Executive Director, Board of Directors, and PAIR's HR consultant should work together to follow proper procedures.

All decisions by the Board of Directors are final.

## PAIR Client Grievance Form

**Name**

First:

Last:

**Your Contact Information (please complete all fields)**

Address Line 1

Address Line 2

City

State  
Phone  
Email

**I want to address my grievance to:**

- PAIR Program Manager
- PAIR Executive Director
- PAIR Board of Directors

**I am filing this grievance with PAIR for the following reason:**

- I am dissatisfied with the services that I am receiving.
- I am dissatisfied that my case was closed and that I have been denied further legal services.
- I have concerns about whether my attorney is complying with the law.

**Please Explain and Provide Details about your complaint. \***

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