



LICENSING ALERT 01-22

**Replaces Licensing Alert 02-96*

Ellen DiDomenico
Deputy Secretary
Department of Drug and Alcohol Programs

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Ellen DiDomenico".

August 4, 2022

Effective: Immediately

Subject: Complaint Investigations for Drug and Alcohol Treatment Facilities.

Purpose: To provide information regarding the Department of Drug and Alcohol Programs (DDAP) process to investigate complaints for licensed drug and alcohol treatment facilities.

Background: DDAP's Bureau of Program Licensure is responsible for investigating all complaints that fall within the regulations and standards for a licensed drug and alcohol treatment facility or cause a risk to the health or safety of a client being served at the facility.

Procedures: Any individual can file a complaint with DDAP, including a client, family member, staff, community member, or other agency. An individual who submits a complaint may request to remain anonymous, however DDAP will disclose the individual's identity as required under law. DDAP will ask the complainant to provide detailed information related to their allegation. If it is determined that the concern falls outside the regulatory authority of DDAP, the department will make a referral to another federal, state, or local agency or entity.

DDAP assesses all complaints which fall under its jurisdiction for degree of risk to clients' health or safety, with timelines for the initiation of an investigation dependent upon the identified risk.

Investigations are conducted by one or more staff, either by an unannounced visit, during the annual licensure renewal inspection, or by telephone. Upon arrival at the facility, DDAP staff will identify themselves and meet with a facility representative to explain that they are there to conduct a complaint investigation. DDAP staff will request information needed for the investigation, which may include a list of facility staff and clients for interviews, administrative policies and procedures, personnel files, and client/patient records. DDAP staff may also conduct a physical plant inspection if the allegations relate to potential noncompliance with physical plant regulations.

At the conclusion of the investigation, DDAP staff will meet with the facility representative to provide a summary of information obtained during the visit. DDAP will review the information to determine if the allegation(s) will be substantiated (in whole or in part), unsubstantiated, or are inconclusive. The facility will receive a written report of the findings from the investigation.

DDAP will require a plan of correction if it issues regulatory citations. Upon receipt and approval of plans of correction, the investigation is considered complete. Upon completion of the investigation, DDAP will provide a summary of its findings to the individual who made the complaint.

Please submit all questions regarding this Licensing Alert to the Bureau of Program Licensure at RA-licensuredivision@pa.gov.