

**Santa Barbara County Sheriff's Office**  
Custody Operations – Policy and Procedures Manual

<b>CHAPTER 3 OPERATIONS</b>	<b>361. Grievance Procedures</b>	
Page: 1 of 3	Revision Date: 6/2015	Review Date: 6/2015
Related Orders: Title 15,CCR, §1073; PC § 6030; Federal Civil Rights of Institutionalized Persons Act		

**I. PURPOSE:**

The purpose of this policy is to provide inmates a procedure for filing grievances and appeals relating to conditions of confinement.

The Federal Civil Rights of Institutionalized Persons Act encourages grievance mechanisms, and many state courts expect that available administrative remedies be pursued before bringing the matter to the court. A functional grievance procedure can serve as an important management information tool, as well as an opportunity for inmates to voice concerns and objections.

**II. POLICY:**

Custody Operations shall provide inmates a procedure through which they can appeal, and have resolved, grievances relating to any conditions of confinements, included but not limited to: medical/mental health care; classification actions; disciplinary actions; program participation; telephone, mail, visiting procedures; food, clothing, and bedding.

**III. DEFINITIONS:**

**IV. PROCEDURES:**

To file a complaint, an inmate shall complete an Inmate Grievance (SH-585a) form. The module deputy will supply Inmate Grievance forms to the inmate, upon request. If more space is needed to document the complaint, an additional Inmate Grievance form will be provided.

1. The deputy receiving the grievance will review it and attempt to resolve the issue. If the grievance is resolved, the deputy will document on the Inmate Grievance form what and how it was resolved, sign/include body number, and follow the distribution process below.
2. Any allegations of serious misconduct will be reported immediately to the on-duty Shift Commander or designee.
3. If the issue is not resolved, the deputy will confirm that the form is filled out completely, sign (include body number) and date the grievance, and the inmate will be provided the golden copy at this time.
4. The remaining original copies will be forwarded to the Shift Commander.
5. The Shift Commander shall then do the following:

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- a) review, sign (include body number) and date the grievance;
- b) enter the grievance information into JMS and obtain a log number;
- c) remove the pink copy and place it in the Administrative Custody Deputy's mailbox; and
- d) place the remaining copies in the appropriate unit's mailbox for response.

6. Grievances are to be resolved at the lowest appropriate staff level.

7. Should the Supervisor determine immediate action is necessary, it shall be the Supervisor's responsibility to ensure that the appropriate staff member, or unit, be notified without delay. In the event the Supervisor decides there is no basis for the grievance or that the problem has been resolved, the Supervisor shall respond as such on the Inmate Grievance form, in the space provided.

**NOTE:** Grievances pertaining to Medical and Mental Health shall be given immediate attention.

**GRIEVANCE REPLY:**

1. Once a reply has been completed, either directly on the Inmate Grievance form or using the Inmate Grievance Reply (SH-585) form, the grievance and reply will be forwarded to the appropriate Lieutenant for review.
2. The Lieutenant shall then do the following:
  - a) Review the Inmate Grievance and reply and if acceptable, will sign the form(s);
  - b) Place the yellow copy, along with Inmate Grievance Reply form (if attached) in the appropriate module mailbox (to be returned to the inmate); and
  - c) Place the white copy, along with the Inmate Grievance Reply Form (if attached) in the Administrative Custody Deputy's mailbox.
3. The Administrative Custody Deputy will log the response and forward the grievance to Custody Records for placement in the Inmate's Custody Record File.

**APPEAL PROCESS:**

1. If the inmate is not satisfied with the reply, he/she may appeal the reply, using another Inmate Grievance form, via the chain of command in the following order:
  - a) Sergeant;
  - b) Lieutenant;
  - c) Appropriate Division Commander; and
  - d) Chief Deputy.
2. The reviewing authority will reply to the appeal and process it accordingly.

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3. This policy requires written responses including reasons for denial at each level of review.
4. All grievance and appeal replies shall be completed and returned within fifteen (15) days from the date of receipt. Should a response be delayed, the inmate will be informed of the delay in writing and provided with the anticipated response date.

**GRIEVANCE SYSTEM ABUSE:**

At times an inmate may submit an excessive amount of grievances in an attempt to paralyze the administration. Grievances determined to be "frivolous" and identified as not pertaining to a valid complaint will be marked as "reviewed by:" and filed in the Inmate's Custody Record File. It is important to document the reasons that a grievance has been considered frivolous.

**NOTE:** All grievances related to health and safety will be responded to, regardless of the quantity submitted.