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COMPLAINT SYSTEM GOES ONLINE

For those who feel an obligation to alert officials of potentially life threatening conditions - whether it's dangerous play at a child care facility, someone suffering from pressure sores at a nursing home or lack of adequate care in a hospital - citizens now have a way to alert health officials 24 hours a day, 365 days a year with the Arizona Department of Health Services online complaint system.

The Division of Licensing Services (DLS), which moved its complaint system online, receives hundreds of complaints every month about issues with licensees, regarding individuals and facilities. The availability of an online system has many advantages including making it easier for the individual filing the complaint, saving taxpayers money and ensuring a speedy investigation when safety is a concern.

“It is extremely critical we know specific information about a potentially dangerous situation as quickly as possible,” said Mary Wiley, Assistant Director for Division of Licensing Services. “Our online complaint system will give the public 24-hour access and ensure we have details to move quickly in the investigation.”

DLS surveyors investigate complaints related to quality of life and care, including residents' rights, abuse, neglect, and staffing at thousands of medical and child care facilities, as well as people with special licenses like midwives and speech language therapists. The Department of Health Services feels it's vital to hear quickly from the people who have daily contact with licensees if there is a problem.

The online form asks basic questions about who, what, when, and where, but also reminds people to include information about potential witnesses and police involvement. The questionnaire is then sent directly to the appropriate licensing office for prioritizing. For instance, a complaint about a nursing home would go to the Long Term Care Office and one concerning an after-school camp would go to the Child Care Office.

“This is the best innovation to help resolve critical problems I have seen in my 18 years with the Department,” says Wiley. “Previously, we received complaints in different formats and it was difficult to analyze them quickly. This simplifies the system to better protect the public.”

Those who wish to file a complaint may be uncomfortable sending personal information through the internet. Therefore, individuals can be rest assured the system is secure and confidentiality is maintained. The DLS investigator, however, will need contact information for the individual filing the complaint for purposes of obtaining missing information as well as updating the individual when the investigation is completed.

The [complaint form](#) is available through the main DHS website at www.azdhs.gov as well as on the Division and each Office page.