



Category
STUDENT COMPLAINT PROCEDURE – 3:00:00:06
Approval
Leadership Council Approved: February 3, 2017
Effective Date/Approved: February 3, 2017
Revised: January 12, 2009; February 3, 2017; June 4, 2019
Responsible Party: Vice President for Student Affairs

I. PURPOSE

- A. Motlow State Community College strives to provide the best instructional atmosphere and level of service to all students. At times, however, students may have an issue, concern or complaint regarding their educational experience. In such cases, the college strives to resolve issues as quickly as possible and at the level closest to the issue.
- B. Students must follow the procedures listed below to resolve their concerns or complaints for matters not involving grade appeals or disciplinary matters. The process for grade appeals and all disciplinary matters are described in the Motlow State Community College Catalog.

II. INFORMAL RESOLUTION

- A. The first step a student should take in resolving a concern or complaint is to directly address the faculty member or staff member in question.
- B. There may be some cases in which a student might feel uncomfortable directly addressing the faculty or staff member. If this is the case, the student shall speak to the appropriate academic dean in the case of a faculty member, or to the supervisor in the case of a staff member.
- C. If there is no resolution at that level, the student may file a formal, written complaint.

III. FORMAL RESOLUTION

- A. Students who have attempted informal resolution to their complaints and need further resolution may file a formal complaint.
- B. Students must fully complete and submit the electronic student complaint form. Once submitted, the form will be reviewed by the appropriate vice president for resolution. The vice president or designee will provide written documentation of the resolution for record keeping purposes.
- C. An investigation will be conducted within ten (10) working days of receiving the complaint.
- D. A decision as a result of the investigation, will be communicated to the student no more than thirty (30) working days of receiving the complaint.

- E. A written appeal may be filed within five (5) days of the decision to the appropriate vice president over the unit in question.
- F. The Vice President will communicate his/her decision on the appeal within ten (10) working days. The decision of the Vice President is final.

IV. COMPLAINTS CONCERNING ACCREDITATION OR VIOLATIONS OF STATE LAW

- A. Students or prospective students who wish to file a complaint related to accreditation or regarding violations of state law not resolved at the institution may submit a Student Complaint Form to the Tennessee Board of Regents at 1 Bridgestone Park, Nashville, Tennessee 37214, or by going online and filling out the form electronically at: <https://www.tbr.edu/academics/program-integrity-student-complaint-form>.
- B. Under Tennessee's open records law, all or parts of complaints will generally be available for review upon request from a member of the public.
- C. Complaints regarding accreditation can also be made by contacting the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges, 1866 Southern Lane, Decatur, Georgia 30033-4097, telephone: 404-679-4500, www.sacscoc.org.
- D. Complaints of fraud, waste or abuse may be made by email at reportfraud@tbr.edu or by calling the Tennessee Comptroller's Hotline for Fraud, Waste and Abuse at 1-800-232-5454.

V. Non-Tennessee Resident Students in [State Authorization Reciprocity Agreement](#) States, commonly known as SARA.

Student complaints relating to consumer protection laws that involve distance learning education offered under the terms and conditions of the State Authorization Reciprocity Agreement (SARA), must first be filed with the institution to seek resolution.

Complainants not satisfied with the outcome of the Institution's internal process may appeal, within two years of the incident about which the complaint is made, to the [Tennessee Higher Education Commission](https://www.tn.gov/thec/bureaus/student-aid-and-compliance/postsecondary-state-authorization/request-for-complaint-review.html) (<https://www.tn.gov/thec/bureaus/student-aid-and-compliance/postsecondary-state-authorization/request-for-complaint-review.html>).

For purposes of this process, a complaint shall be defined as a formal assertion in writing that the terms of SARA or the laws, standards or regulations incorporated by the SARA Policies and Standards (<http://www.nc-sara.org/content/sara-manual>) have been violated by the institution operating under the terms of SARA.

For a list of SARA member States, please visit the [NC-SARA website](http://nc-sara.org/sara-states-institutions) (<http://nc-sara.org/sara-states-institutions>). Students residing in non-SARA states should consult their respective State of residence for further instruction for filing a complaint.