
Revision Responsibility: Executive Assistant to the President

Responsible Executive Officer: President

Source/Reference: [TBR Policy 5:01:02:00](#) Columbia State Policy 02:07:00
[TBR Policy 4:01:05:50](#) Columbia State Policy 05:01:00
[TBR Policy 3:02:00:01](#) Columbia State Policy 05:23:00
[TBR Policy 3:02:01:00](#) Columbia State Handbook
[TBR Guideline P-080](#)

PURPOSE

This policy provides directions for students and members of the public who wish to file an informal or formal complaint and directions for tracking formal written complaints.

POLICY

- I. Informal complaint – An informal complaint is one expressed verbally or by e-mail (if e-mail does not contain the required information for a formal complaint) and is handled in accordance with the informal complaint procedures.
- II. Formal complaint – A formal complaint is one that is submitted in writing, contains the required information, and follows the formal complaint process.
- III. This policy does not apply to the discharge of procedures outline in other policies relative to:
 - A. Student grade, admissions, financial aid, or other appeal processes outlined in the catalog or student handbook;
 - B. Discrimination, harassment, or employee grievance policies executed by the human resources officer;
 - C. Appeals and grievance policies and procedures as outlined in other College policies, the student handbook, and code of conduct.

However, the tracking instructions in this policy do apply to all formal policies including those listed in this section.

- IV. A file of all formal complaints logs will be forwarded to the executive assistant to the president for five years on a monthly basis where they will be kept for five years.

PROCEDURES

- I. Informal Complaint by Students for members of the public
 - A. The complaint is submitted verbally or by e-mail and does not contain the required information to be a formal complaint.
 - B. Informal complaints are to be dealt with through face-to-face discussions between the complainant and the College contact of question. If the complaint involves an instructor, the complainant should, unless there is some compelling reason, first discuss the complaint with that instructor.
 - C. If resolution cannot be reached that is mutually satisfactory, the complainant may put the complaint in writing and move to the procedure on formal complaints outlined below. If a formal complaint is not filed within ten days of the discussion, the complaint will be considered inactive.
 - D. It is the responsibility of the College official/faculty member to write a memo for record that outlines the nature of the informal complaint and the resolution. The College official/faculty member is to maintain such memoranda in a file accessible to their supervisor upon request. Files are to be maintained for a period of five years.
- II. Formal Complaint by students or members of the public
 - A. The complaint must be submitted in writing to a responsible College administrator supervising an area. Faculty and staff who receive a formal complaint should forward it to the supervisor of the area(s) involved in the complaint.
 - B. A Formal written complaint should contain the following information:
 1. Date Complaint filed
 2. Complainant information
 - a. Name
 - b. Phone number
 - c. Address
 - d. E-mail address if possible
 3. Complainant relationship to the College
 4. Detailed description of the complaint
 5. Resolution desired
 - C. The administrator handling the complaint is to gather information as necessary, including information from the complainant and respondent if allegations exist against another person.

- D. A written response (hard copy or e-mail) is to be sent to the complainant. A copy of the complaint and the written response is to be sent to the executive assistant to the president.
- E. If the complainant is not satisfied with the response, he/she may file a written complaint with the appropriate vice president. In such cases, the vice president will gather information and provide a written response to the complainant with a copy to the executive assistant to the president.
- F. If a satisfactory resolution cannot be reached, the complainant may file a written complaint with the president, except in those cases where policy determines the final ruling is specified to be another administrator. In cases appealed to the president, the president will gather information and provide a final written response to the complainant with a copy to the file.

III. Tracking formal complaints

- A. The following offices are tasked with handling formal complaints:
 - 1. Academic Dean
 - 2. Vice President for Academic Affairs
 - 3. Vice President for Student Affairs
 - 4. Director of Human Resources
 - 5. Vice President for Finance and Administration
 - 6. Vice President for Williamson Campus and External Services
 - 7. President
- B. Each office that handles formal complaints will maintain a log of complaints using the Columbia State Community College Formal Complaint Log.

Revised: September 2018