

Maryland Higher Education Commission (MHEC) Complaint Processes for Colleges, Universities, and Private Career Schools

A. College or University Complaints

For a complaint involving a college or university, a student or faculty personnel must first exhaust the complaint/grievance procedures established by the institution.

1. A student or faculty personnel may submit a complaint in writing to MHEC when it involves an alleged violation of the Education Article, COMAR, or college or university policy, but only after the student or faculty member has first exhausted the complaint/grievance procedures established by the institution.
2. Should the opinion of the complainant be that the complaint has not been resolved appropriately by the institution, the complainant may submit an official complaint to the Maryland Higher Education Commission (MHEC) in writing; students should use the [College and University Student Complaint Form](#) and faculty personnel should use the [College and University Faculty - Staff Complaint Form](#). The Faculty Complaint Form is not used to make a complaint against a professor or faculty personnel.
3. To file an official complaint, a signed [College and University Student Complaint Form](#) or [College and University Faculty - Staff Complaint Form](#) must be submitted to MHEC with copies of supporting documentation included.

Student complaint documents are to be submitted to the [MHEC Student Complaint Portal](#).

Faculty/ staff complaint documents must be submitted by email to:


collegiatecomplaint.mhec@maryland.gov

4. Within 10 business days of receipt of an official complaint, MHEC will acknowledge its receipt and begin investigating for evidence of violation of the Education Article, COMAR, or school policy.
5. A copy of the complaint and supporting documents will be provided to the College or university President. MHEC will require the President to look into the matter and provide a written report back to MHEC within 30 business days of receipt of MHEC notification.
6. MHEC staff may interview the institution employees, students, or the student complainant as part of its investigation.

7. MHEC may take regulatory action based on its review and in accordance with the Education Article and COMAR Title 13B, and the manner for which the institution is approved to operate.
8. MHEC will inform the student or faculty complainant and the college or university President in writing of its determination(s).
9. CONFIDENTIALITY NOTICE. Student complaints are treated as confidential to the extent permitted under the Maryland Public Information Act (MPIA) and the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA). Faculty complaints generally are NOT protected from disclosure under MPIA or FERPA. MHEC cannot assure the confidentiality of your faculty complaint.

B. Private Career School Complaints

For Private Career Schools, complaints involving alleged violations of the Education Article or the Code of Maryland Regulations (COMAR) Title 13B Maryland Higher Education Commission, or a Private Career School's own written institutional policies, may be submitted to MHEC in the following manner:

1. A student may submit a complaint in writing to MHEC when it involves an alleged violation of the Education Article, COMAR, or school policy, but only after the student has first exhausted the complaint/grievance procedures established by the institution.
2. A signed  [PCS Student Complaint Form](#) (click on link to download) must be submitted to MHEC with copies of supporting documentation included. The complaint documents are to be submitted to:
Associate Director of Career and Workforce Education
Maryland Higher Education Commission
6 N. Liberty Street, 10th Floor
Baltimore, MD 21201
FAX: 410-332-0270
Email: PCS.MHEC@maryland.gov
3. Within 5 business days of receipt of a complaint, MHEC will acknowledge its receipt and begin investigating for evidence of violation of the Education Article, COMAR, or school policy.
4. A copy of the student complaint and documents will be provided to the institution's Director. MHEC will require the Director to look into the matter and report back to MHEC within 10 business days of receipt of MHEC notification.
5. Any requests by MHEC to the school or the student complainant for information or documents necessary for MHEC to achieve a determination of the complaint must be answered by the school or the student complainant within 10 business days following receipt of MHEC's request.
6. MHEC staff may interview the institution employees, students, or the student complainant as part of its investigation.
7. MHEC may take regulatory action based on its review and in accordance with the Education Article and COMAR Title 13B, and the manner for which the institution is approved to operate.
8. MHEC will inform the student complainant and the school Director in writing of its determination(s).

C. Specific types of complaints are handled by different agencies or organizations. A student must submit a complaint to the appropriate agency or organization as described below:

- a. A complaint pertaining to occupational licensure requirements is to be submitted to the appropriate licensing board or entity. Licensing board contact information is found in the institution's catalog.
- b. A complaint concerning compliance with the standards of accreditation is to be submitted to the institution's accrediting body. Accrediting body contact information is found in the institution's catalog and website.
- c. A complaint pertaining to potential violations of consumer protection is to be submitted to:

Consumer Protection Division
Office of the Attorney General
200 Saint Paul Place
Baltimore, Maryland 21202
Telephone: 410-528-8662
More information is available at:
<http://www.oag.state.md.us/Consumer/complaint.htm>

- d. A complaint concerning discrimination is to be submitted to:

Office for Civil Rights, Philadelphia Office
U.S. Department of Education
100 Penn Square East, Suite 515
Philadelphia, PA 19107-3323
Telephone: 215-656-8541
More information is available at:
<http://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/docs/howto.html>

D. Complaints pertaining to matters other than those addressed in the Education Article or COMAR Title 13B, or pertaining to the institution's approved policies, will not be entertained by MHEC, nor will it be referred to another agency or organization.