

VIII. Complaint Policy

A complaint against an accredited program or against the ACPEinc may be filed with the Board of Trustees of the ACPEinc by staff, employees, students, candidates, or graduates of member programs or by members of the public. Such complaints must be related to the ACPEinc's policies or accreditation standards. Complaints relating to any other matters will not be considered.

A complaint must be in writing, signed by the complainant(s), and provide contact information including the address, telephone number and email address of each complainant. The ACPEinc will not normally act on anonymous complaints. If, however, an anonymous complaint raises matters so egregious as to suggest that action may be warranted, it may conduct an independent investigation.

The ACPEinc will seek to protect the identity of complainants who file complaints regarding accredited programs except as reasonably necessary successfully to complete an investigation. Each such complainant will be advised of these limitations, and of their right to withdraw the complaint prior to the beginning of any investigation or at any time prior to a final decision having been made.

8.01 Complaints Lodged Against Accredited Programs

A complaint lodged against an accredited program will be reviewed by the Standing Committee on Accreditation (SCA) within forty (40) calendar days of receipt to determine whether its allegations relate to the ACPEinc policies or accreditation standards. If the SCA determines that the complaint does not relate to such policies or standards, the complainant will be notified that the ACPEinc cannot take action and the complaint will be dismissed.

If the SCA determines that the complaint does relate to the ACPEinc policies or accreditation standards, it will forward a summary of the complaint protecting the identity of the complainant, where possible, to the program for a response. The program must provide a written response within thirty (30) calendar days. The program may request an extension of time to respond but must explain why the extension is needed. The SCA may grant an extension of time to respond of up to an additional thirty (30) calendar days.

Upon receipt of the program's written response, the SCA will, within forty (40) calendar days, review the complaint and the program's response, along with any documentation received, and develop a report outlining its finding as to whether any policies and/or accreditation standards were violated.

The SCA's report will be forwarded to the Board of Trustees for final action. The Board will make a final determination within six (6) weeks of receiving the SCA's report. If necessary, a special meeting of the Board will be convened to consider the report.

If the Board of Trustees determines that a policy or standard was violated, it will notify the program of its finding and require that the program take action to come into compliance with the relevant policies and/or standards. If the Board determines that the policies and/or standards were not violated, the Board will notify the program of its finding and, at the same time, send a letter to the complainant notifying them of its final determination.

8.02 Complaints Lodged Against the ACPEinc

Complaints about the application or implementation of the ACPEinc's accreditation standards or policies are reviewed by the Executive Committee of the ACPEinc. Such complaints must be submitted in writing to the President, who will present them to the Executive Committee at its next regularly scheduled meeting.

If an ACPEinc staff member, Board member, or Committee member is the subject of a complaint, that person will not participate in the decision-making about the complaint. Upon completion of the

investigation, the Executive Committee will present its findings and any recommended actions to the Board at its next regularly scheduled meeting and the Board will take appropriate action, when necessary. The complainant will be advised in a timely manner of the ACPEinc's response to the complaint.

Complaints about inspection teams or inspection team members must be submitted in writing and may not be anonymous. The ACPEinc Executive Council will investigate the complaint by collecting information relevant to the specific incident through, for example, interviews with program personnel and inspection team members. The Executive Council will present the results of the investigation to the Chair and President for appropriate action. The ACPEinc will notify the complainant of the results of the investigation.

Ratified by the Board 20210119