



Section	Core Organizational Policies
No.	ORG – 05
Title	<b>External Complaints about CCA</b>
Approval date	April 18, 2012
Approved by	Board of Directors
Dates of revision	January 20, 2016

## ORG - 05 External Complaints about CCA

### Scope

This policy applies to all directors, employees, volunteers and agents.

### Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to outline the process by which CCA will address complaints made by external sources about its services and operations.

### Definitions

Member Associations – Associations that are Full or Associate members of CCA as described in the CCA Bylaws.

Participating Organizations (POs) – Organizations that have agreed to participate in the CCA accreditation program or other CCA services.

### Policy

As an organization interested in continuous quality improvement, CCA will view complaints and concerns as a learning opportunity. Complaints will be investigated and responded to in an expedient manner.

#### 1. Principles

- 1.1. An individual or organization with a complaint has the right to have his/her/its complaint reviewed in a timely manner without fear of embarrassment or reprisal.
- 1.2. Individuals about whom complaints have been made have the right to be informed of allegations and afforded the opportunity to respond to them.
- 1.3. The values that govern CCA will guide the complaints resolution process.
- 1.4. In reviewing the complaint, the CCA Executive Director and/or Board Executives will ensure that the parties involved in the complaint are given fair opportunity to explain their perspectives.
- 1.5. If the complaint is about a CCA accreditation review process, every effort will be made by CCA to ensure a fair accreditation review process.
- 1.6. The complaints process is not to be used for disagreements about the findings of the site review team, as this is dealt with through the organization's response to the site review report.

1.7. All materials and information relating to the complaint and any resulting investigation will be treated as confidential and will not be shared except on a need-to-know basis.

## 2. Reporting

2.1. Complaints received will be documented in writing and the reports maintained on file by the Executive Director. The Executive Director shall report to the board on an annual basis the number and type of complaints received and their resolution. In addition, the Executive Director will report to the board in a timely manner any complaints that pose a risk to the organization.

### **Procedures: External Complaints**

1. Complaints related to individual CCA staff, contractors, volunteers (including accreditation review team members) or board members
  - 1.1. Contacts made to CCA with a concern/complaint about CCA shall be acknowledged within 5 working days. This means that at minimum, a CCA staff person will contact the person to set up a time when they may speak to the CCA Executive Director to discuss their concern/complaint.
  - 1.2. The individual with the complaint will first be encouraged to express the complaint to the individual most directly involved in the situation. This is important in terms of ensuring that every attempt has been made to resolve the complaint in a direct, open and constructive manner.
  - 1.3. If expressing the complaint to the individual involved is not feasible, or if doing so does not resolve the complaint, the individual is encouraged to express the complaint to the CCA Executive Director (or designate) or, in the case of a CCA board member, to the Chairperson of the CCA Board of Directors.<sup>1</sup> The Executive Director/Board Chairperson will respond to the complaint in writing within one month of receiving it.
  - 1.4. If the complaint is about an accreditation review process that is underway, a more immediate response shall be taken as required. The complaint will be investigated immediately. When a complaint is found to be valid, the Accreditation Manager, in consultation with the Executive Director, will develop and implement a corrective action plan as soon as practically possible and will communicate this to the complainant as appropriate. Corrective action could include dismissal/replacement of a site reviewer if warranted. A change of review team member may occur if necessary.
  - 1.5. If the complaint is in regard to the Executive Director and/or the Executive Director is unable to resolve the situation to the individual's or organization's satisfaction, the individual/organization involved may appeal to the Chairperson of the CCA Board of Directors.
  - 1.6. The Board Chairperson will refer the complaint to the other Board Executives, who jointly will conduct an investigation of the complaint and provide a written response

---

<sup>1</sup> Note: It is understood that it would be difficult for an individual at an organization undergoing an accreditation review to complain directly to one of the CCA review team members, therefore, in this situation the complaint would be directly accepted by the Executive Director or designate.

to the individual/organization involved within two months of receiving the complaint.

- 1.7. If the complaint is in regard to the Board Chairperson, it will be referred to the Vice Chairperson of the board. The Vice Chairperson shall constitute an ad hoc committee of board members to investigate the complaint and provide a written response to the individual/organization involved within two months of receiving the complaint.
  - 1.8. Complainants and those complained about shall be advised of progress in the investigation process.
  - 1.9. Depending on the nature of the complaint and the outcome of the complaint investigation, a decision may be taken to take follow-up action. (If the complaint pertains to staff, please refer to Human Resources Policy - Disciplinary Action.)
2. Complaints related to CCA Policies, Procedures or CCA Review Processes
- 2.1. Contacts made to CCA with a concern/complaint about CCA shall be acknowledged within 5 working days. This means that at minimum, a CCA staff person will contact the person to set up a time when they may speak to the CCA Executive Director to discuss their concern/complaint.
  - 2.2. Individuals or organizations with such a complaint are encouraged to initially express it to the CCA Executive Director in order to receive clarification of CCA policies, procedures and processes.
  - 2.3. If the complainant continues to have a concern, or does not wish to verbally express it to the Executive Director, he/she/they shall be encouraged by the Executive Director to submit the concern/complaint in writing.
  - 2.4. The Executive Director will review the written complaint and bring it forward for consideration to the Board Chairperson and/or a committee of the board as appropriate. The Board Chairperson or board committee (whoever is reviewing the complaint) shall investigate the complaint and respond in writing to the complainant within two month(s) of receiving the complaint in writing.
  - 2.5. The complainant shall be advised of progress in the investigation process.