



COMPLAINT POLICY

ARC/STSA in collaboration with Commission on Accreditation for Allied Health Education Programs (CAAHEP) follows due process procedures when a written complaint is received alleging that an accredited program is non-compliant with established accreditation Standards.

ARC/STSA procedures for formal complaints regarding CAAHEP accredited surgical technology and surgical assisting programs are as follows:

1. Complaints must be in writing, signed by the complainant(s), and addressed to the Executive Director of the ARC/STSA. Complaints must relate directly to non-compliance with accreditation Standards. No other complaints will be considered by the ARC/STSA. Acknowledgement of the complaint is provided to the complainant(s) by the mailing or emailing of the ARC/STSA complaint policy. Anonymous complaints are not accepted.
2. ARC/STSA and CAAHEP emphasize that they will not intervene on behalf of individuals or act as a court of appeal for faculty members or students in matters of admission, appointment, calculation of grades, promotion, or dismissal. ARC/STSA and CAAHEP will act only when they determine that practices or conditions indicate the program may not be in substantial compliance with the Standards or with established accreditation policies.
3. Names of those issuing complaints will be held in strictest confidence by the ARC/STSA, unless written permission is granted to reveal names to the institution in question. This requisite shall be waived in the event the ARC/STSA is required to turn over any documentation as determined by a bona fide judicial or governmental process. Failure to grant permission to reveal the complainant's name to the program in question may result in the dismissal of the complaint. Without the release of actual records that apply to the complaint, the ARC/STSA may conclude that it is not able to determine whether Standards were violated or not.
4. All published institutional grievance policies must be pursued and exhausted by those issuing complaints before the complaint is reviewed by the ARC/STSA. The complainant(s) should demonstrate that reasonable efforts have been made to resolve the complaint per the institution's grievance policies. Additional documentation may be requested to support the complainant's reasonable efforts.
5. After the ARC/STSA is confident that all institutional channels for grievance have been exhausted, the letter of complaint is forwarded to ARC/STSA Executive Committee to determine if the complaint is a relevant allegation as related to the Standards.
6. If determined to be a relevant allegation by the ARC/STSA Executive Committee, the ARC/STSA will send a copy of the complaint to the institution delineating Standards that may have been violated, requesting a response within 30 days. A letter outlining the status of the complaint will be sent to the complainant(s) requesting any additional documentation and informing the complainant(s) that all documentation and institutional response will be reviewed at the next ARC/STSA Board of Directors meeting. If the complaint is determined not be a relevant allegation relating to the Standards, the complainant will be notified that no action can be taken by the ARC/STSA.

7. The ARC/STSA Board of Directors, upon review of all submitted documentation, will determine if the program is in non-compliance with the Standards, according to the complaint. The following actions are available to the ARC/STSA:
 - a. No action is required because non-compliance with the Standards could not be established. A letter to the complainant(s) and the institution will describe the findings of the Board of Directors.
 - b. Non-compliance is established, and the ARC/STSA will request of the institution a plan of action and appropriate progress report(s) to address Standard(s) not met, or administers corrective action relevant to accreditation policy(ies). A letter to the complainant(s) will describe the findings of the ARC/STSA Board of Directors
 - c. Other appropriate actions may be taken as determined by the Board of Directors consistent with CAAHEP and ARC/STSA policy.

BoD Approved Revision 09/18/09
Effective Date 09/18/09