

Procedures for Handling Complaints about Program Compliance with Accreditation Standards

A. Complaint Procedure

Any person concerned about the quality of a Genetic Counseling Program accredited by the Accreditation Council for Genetic Counseling (ACGC) may contact the ACGC Executive Office. The ACGC Board will consider and investigate those complaints containing allegations which, if substantiated, may indicate noncompliance with accreditation standards.

The steps to follow in filing a complaint with the ACGC are as follows:

1. The ACGC will not take any action based on an anonymous complaint.
2. A complaint may be made orally or via email. However, such a complaint must be followed up within 30 days by a written, signed complaint and mailed to the ACGC Executive Office. A written complaint should include as much information and detail as possible about the circumstances that form the basis of the complaint.
3. If a written complaint indicates circumstances which, if substantiated, may indicate noncompliance with accreditation standards, the ACGC may request that written corroboration be provided within 60 days from the date of the written complaint. Such corroboration might include letters or other documentation not previously provided to the ACGC by the complainant.
4. Although the complaint will be treated with discretion, the ACGC does not guarantee the confidentiality of the complainant. Specifically:
 - a. Any information about a program/school may be released to the Program Director, Dean, Department Head, or Administrative Supervisor (hereinafter, each is referred to as a "Program Official"), members and staff of the ACGC, their respective attorneys, and other persons authorized by the Program Official, required by law, or necessary, in the discretion of the ACGC, to fully investigate the complaint.
 - b. The complainant and any corroborators will be required to sign an authorization to release the written complaint and corroborating materials to the Program Official, members and staff of the ACGC, their respective attorneys, and appropriate outside parties.
5. If an oral or e-mail complaint is not followed up within 30 days by a written complaint, or if a release authorization and requested written corroboration are not provided within 60 days, the file will be closed and no further action will be taken by the ACGC. The file may be reopened at the discretion of the ACGC.

B. Investigation Procedure

1. The ACGC will determine whether a complaint raises issues relating to compliance with accreditation standards. If the Accreditation Committee determines that the complaint does not

raise such issues, the ACGC will notify the complainant, in a timely manner that the complaint is beyond the purview of the ACGC.

2. If the ACGC determines that the complaint raises issues relating to compliance with accreditation standards, the ACGC will notify the Program Official of the complaint in writing within 30 days. The Program Official also may be requested to answer specific questions or provide other information, documentation, or materials.
3. The complainant will be informed if an ACGC investigation is initiated, but the result(s) of any ACGC investigation will be treated as confidential and will be entered into the program's confidential accreditation file.
4. The ACGC will conduct an investigation of complaints indicating that a program may not be in compliance with accreditation standards. The ACGC will present the complaint and results of the subsequent investigation, which may or may not include recommendations for action, to the ACGC board of directors within 60 days after the receipt of the written complaint and any other requested materials.
5. If the ACGC, in its sole discretion, determines that sufficient evidence does not exist to indicate that the program is not in compliance with accreditation standards, it will close the matter and report the same in a timely manner to the Program Official.
6. If the ACGC, in its sole discretion, determines that sufficient evidence exists to indicate that the program may not be in compliance with accreditation standards, it may request additional information or a progress report, or schedule a limited survey or site visit, or take any other appropriate action to further investigate the matter. The Program Official will be notified in a timely manner of the ACGC's action.
7. If the complaint is found to have merit, all expenses incurred by the ACGC will be reimbursed by the program.
8. If the ACGC, in its sole discretion, determines that a program is out of compliance with accreditation standards, the following adverse accreditation actions may be taken:
 - a. Temporary Probation
 - b. Probation
 - c. Revocation
 - d. Accreditation with restrictions.
9. An adverse accreditation action may be appealed pursuant to the ACGC Appeal Process for Adverse Accreditation Decisions.

The ACGC will ***NOT*** intervene on behalf of an individual complainant regarding, for example, matters of admission, appointment, promotion, or dismissal of faculty or students.

The ACGC will investigate complaints ***ONLY*** where the complaint indicates possible noncompliance with accreditation standards.