

Policy 912 Issue or Complaint Resolution

Policy Number: 912

Effective Date: 06/01/16

Revised Date: 06/20/17, 07/09/18, 10/30/18, 09/15/2020

Scope

This Policy on Issue or Complaint Resolution applies to faculty, staff, predoctoral researchers, summer scholars and applicants ("Covered Individuals") of The Graduate School of the Stowers Institute for Medical Research ("School") who have a dispute or concern based on or related to a disability under section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act.

Purpose

It is the School's policy to provide a means by which issues OR concerns and complaints of Covered Individuals may be heard and addressed in a prompt and fair manner. This Policy is available to any Covered Individual who wishes to bring forward any complaint that is not covered by another avenue of redress through School policies or protocols. For example, the following matters can be addressed through School policies or protocols and are not subject to this Policy:

- Academic Conduct Policy
- Academic Probation & Dismissal Policy
- Predoctoral Researchers' Complaints Protocol
- Sexual Harassment Policy

Policy

1. If a Covered Individual believes that any working or educational environment condition, policy, practice, or action by the School, another Covered Individual, or any person with whom the School business brings the Covered Individual in contact is unsafe, unjust, or inappropriate, they should address such a problem with their faculty. Open discussion is encouraged so that problems are resolved between a Covered Individual and the faculty in the normal course of their day-to-day relationships. Experience suggests that most problems are solved with frank, prompt, and open discussion at this level. Complaints are best resolved if addressed early, and it may be difficult to substantiate the allegations made if brought forward after significant time has passed.
2. If step #1 above does not result in a resolution, a Covered Individual should promptly address the issue with the Dean for Academic Affairs and/or Human Resources Officer, who will review the issue and collaborate with appropriate parties and personnel to review the issue, investigate the facts and determine what, if any appropriate actions are to be taken. Certain issues must be addressed first through another applicable policy or protocol and will be redirected during this step #2 as deemed appropriate, such as: Protocol 1050 (Concerns Regarding Predoctoral Researchers).

3. If the issue is not satisfactorily resolved during step #2, the Covered Individual may seek higher level review from the Dean as appropriate, in the discretion of the School. The decision rendered by the Dean shall be final unless the Covered Individual makes a final appeal to the President. A decision at a lower level will also be deemed final should the Covered Individual not seek further review within a reasonable time based on the issue.

It shall be considered a violation of this Policy for any Covered Individual to knowingly file a false or malicious complaint. If the School believes that such a false or malicious complaint has been filed, the matter will be addressed in accordance with the School's applicable policies and protocols. Participants in the issue resolution process should respect the matter as confidential. All information revealed and all discussions held shall be as confidential as reasonably possible within legal requirements and organizational responsibilities, and within limits allowing for the review to occur.

No employee or predoctoral researcher shall retaliate or discriminate against a predoctoral researcher because of the individual's filing of or participation in the review of an issue. Retaliation includes taking any action which may have a materially adverse impact on the individual's academic success or the learning environment of the predoctoral researcher if such action is taken because of the individual's filing of or participation in the review of an issue, whether or not such issue is determined to be valid. Any person believing that retaliation has taken or is taking place should immediately report the matter to the Dean for Academic Affairs or Human Resources Officer.

This Policy was approved by the GSSIMR Board of Directors on September 5, 2018.

This Policy was reviewed and amended by the GSSIMR Board of Directors on September 15, 2020.

This Policy was reviewed by the GSSIMR Board of Directors on September 20, 2023.

This Policy will be reviewed by the GSSIMR Board of Directors in 2026.