

MARION TECHNICAL COLLEGE
ADMINISTRATIVE POLICY/PROCEDURES

AP 440 Student Complaints

**Effective 6-16-98
Approved 1-27-21**

POLICY:

- (A) The purpose of this policy is to provide a method of due process for the resolution of issues between students and Marion Technical College, or a person(s) acting for the College, such as an instructor, administrator, or other employee of the College. These procedures are designed to afford simplicity, speed, and high standards of fairness to all parties.
- (B) Definitions:
 - (1) “Complaint” is defined as a claim or assertion of a violation of: (1) a College policy; (2) an administrative procedure; (3) an administrative rule or regulation; or (4) a state or federal statute by the College.
 - (2) “Formal complaint” is defined as a written complaint submitted by a student and received by an employee of the College.
 - (3) “Student,” is defined as: (1) an individual who is currently enrolled; (2) an inactive student who has attended within the past academic year that can return without reapplying for admission; or (3) a graduate of less than two years.
 - (4) “Retaliation” is defined as the act of treating an individual(s) less favorably, knowingly or unknowingly punishing or denying access to services of the College, or adverse action taken against an individual for their role in the informal or formal complaint process. Retaliation can take many forms; this definition is not all inclusive.
 - (5) “Business days” is defined as the hours between 8 a.m. and 5 p.m. Monday through Friday, excluding holidays and other times when the College is closed or notifies changes to its regular business hours.
 - (6) “In writing” or “written” is defined as a hard copy letter or document, or an email.
- (C) Exclusion – All action involving dissatisfaction with grades are excluded from the scope of this policy, and should be handled according to *AP 568 – Appealing a Final Course Grade*. However, other academic related appeals not directly related to grades (e.g., cheating/plagiarism) are within the scope of this policy.
- (D) Eligibility – A student believing that they have a legitimate claim arising from the action or inaction of the College, or a person(s) acting on behalf of the college, may file a formal complaint under this policy.

- (E) Any complaints related to disability services, such as classroom accommodations, disparate treatment due to a disability or impairment, or other concerns, should be directed to the Disability Services Office (ds@mtc.edu) or the ADA Coordinator (ada@mtc.edu) to assist in resolving disability related matters. Should a student have a complaint against the Disability Services Office or the ADA Coordinator, the complaint will be handled following the procedures of this policy.
- (F) All formal complaints will be received and reviewed by the President's Office. The President's Office will ensure the procedures below are followed to ensure a prompt, fair, and judicious process is afforded to all students.
- (G) Retaliation against a student who has submitted a formal complaint is expressly prohibited.

PROCEDURES:

- (A) If a student has a complaint, they are encouraged to attempt to resolve the matter immediately and informally with the employee.
- (B) If the complaint cannot be solved informally, the process for resolving the formal complaint is as follows:
 - (1) The student should submit a formal complaint in writing to the President's Office, preferably within five (5) business days of the informal resolution attempt or incident. This can be via the online complaint form found on the College's [website](#), which is automatically directed to the President's Office, or hard copy letter. If a student delivers a hard copy formal complaint to an employee of the College, the employee should deliver the formal complaint to the President's Office.

The formal complaint should include the following information:

- (a) The student's contact information (full name, home address, MTC email address, phone number, and PowerCampus ID are preferred);
 - (b) Description of the complaint, including dates, locations, employee dealt with, etc.;
 - (c) Any action(s) to resolve the complaint informally, including the outcomes of the attempt(s).
 - (d) Desired resolution of the complaint.
- (2) The President's Office will review the formal complaint and contact the student to acknowledge receipt.
- (3) Dependent on the nature of the complaint, the President's Office will share the formal complaint with the appropriate supervisor or department head of the

employee cited in the formal complaint. The supervisor or department head will review the formal complaint, follow-up with both the student and employee for clarification of the situation and ask any pertinent questions, and issue a written decision to the student and employee within five (5) business days of receipt of the formal complaint. The written decision will also be shared with the President's Office for record-keeping.

- (4) Following receipt of the written decision from the supervisor or department head, the student must respond in writing if they accept the decision or wish to appeal the decision within five (5) business days.
 - (5) If the student wishes to appeal the decision, the supervisor or department head will share the formal complaint, their written decision, and the student's request for appeal with the area vice president. The area vice president will review the formal complaint, written decision, and request for appeal. The area vice president will issue a written decision within ten (10) business days to the student and employee. The written decision will also be shared with the President's Office for record-keeping.
 - (6) Following receipt of the written decision from the area vice president, the student must respond in writing if they accept the decision or wish to appeal the decision within ten (10) business days.
 - (7) If the student wishes to appeal the decision, the area vice president will share the formal complaint, both written decisions, and the student's requests for appeal with the president. The president will review all of the documentation and issue a decision within twenty (20) business days to the student and employee.
 - (8) The decision of the president is final, and the last step of college-level due process.
- (C) The number of days indicated in the above procedures should be considered as the maximum, and every effort should be made to expedite the process. In some cases, an extension may be necessary to accommodate an absence, a holiday or College closure, or other unforeseen circumstances. If an extension is necessary, the student will be notified and provided an explanation in writing.
- (D) With respect to all formal complaints:
- (1) If the complaint involves a question of judgment or opinion not covered by the scope of the College's policies or rules, the President's Office will review the formal complaint and meet with both parties to attempt to resolve the complaint.
 - (2) Retaliation against a student or employee for their role in a formal complaint by any person is expressly prohibited and will be dealt with through the

appropriate disciplinary action measures, *AP 420 – Student Code of Conduct and Disciplinary Action* and *AP 306 – Disciplinary Action* (employees).

- (E) As required by the Higher Learning Commission, the College's accrediting body, the President's Office will keep a record of all formal complaints received by the College, and any written decisions, appeal requests, or supporting documentation. These records will be retained for ten years. Appropriate measures will be taken to ensure student anonymity when accrediting bodies, including the Higher Learning Commission, request records pertaining to the College's formal complaints.

PRIOR APPROVAL DATES: 6-16-98; 9-17-02