

4.500 Complaints Regarding an Accredited or Developing Program

A. Formal Complaints

Any person may submit a formal complaint against an accredited program or a program within the initial accreditation review process. The JRCNMT only reviews complaints regarding programs that may not be in substantial compliance with the *Standards* or may not be following published JRCNMT accreditation policies. JRCNMT is not a mediator of disputes and, generally, will not impose itself in a manner that limits the discretion of programs in the normal operation of their personnel or academic policies and procedures, unless a violation of JRCNMT standards or policies is specifically alleged. Normal institutional operations include: admission; grading; credit transfer decisions; fees or other financial matters; disciplinary matters; contractual rights and obligations of students and personnel.

The JRCNMT will not:

- seek any type of compensation, re-admission, or other redress on behalf of an individual.
- respond to or take action upon any complaint that is defamatory, hostile, or profane.
- involve itself in collective bargaining disputes.
- review or act upon a complaint if it is filed with the JRCNMT more than one year after the circumstances leading to the complaint occurred or more than one year after the final disposition of the complaint by the institution after the application of its own grievance policies and procedures.

A complaint should not be filed until the complainant can demonstrate that reasonable efforts have been made to resolve the complaint using existing appeal or grievance mechanisms at the institution.

In rare circumstances, where credible violations of JRCNMT standards or policies are alleged, JRCNMT may, in its sole discretion, investigate complaints that are not submitted on the JRCNMT Complaint Form.

B. Complaint Process

1. Complaints must be submitted in writing on the JRCNMT Complaint Form, which can be downloaded from the agency's website or requested by email or phone. All sections of the form, including the Release section, must be complete and the form must be signed by the complainant. Submission of the complaint form may be by email or U.S. Mail.
2. The JRCNMT executive director will acknowledge receipt of the complaint within seven business days of its receipt and will contact the complainant to ensure the person has a copy of Policy 4.500 and understands the complaint review process. If the Complaint Form was incomplete or a necessary document related to it was not provided, the complainant will be asked to submit the information. The complaint is not considered complete and eligible for review until the necessary information has been provided to the JRCNMT.
3. Within seven business days of receipt of the complete complaint, the JRCNMT executive director will transmit the complaint documentation to the executive officers of the JRCNMT. The executive director, in consultation with the executive officers and, if necessary, legal counsel, will determine whether the complaint falls within the evaluative authority of the JRCNMT.
 - a. If it is determined that the complaint does not relate to the *Standards* or to established policies, the complainant shall be notified accordingly, in writing, within 20 business days following receipt of the complaint.

- b. If it is determined that the complaint warrants evaluation, the executive director of the JRCNMT shall provide a copy of the complaint to the program director and the President/CEO of the institution that is the subject of the complaint. The program shall submit a response to the JRCNMT within 30 business days of the program's receipt of the letter of notice.
4. As part of the review, the JRCNMT may request additional information or documentation relative to the complaint from the complainant, the program, or other relevant sources.
5. If necessary to gather critical information, the executive officers may authorize an unannounced focused site visit to the program without prior notification to program officials. The visit will focus on the complaint allegations. The cost of such a visit shall be borne by the program.
6. Upon receipt of all requested information, the executive officers of the JRCNMT shall consider the complaint and all relevant information obtained in the course of evaluation. The decision of the executive officers may include any of the following:
 - a. Consider the complaint resolved and continue the program's current accreditation;
 - b. Continue the program's current accreditation but require additional reporting, which may include one or more progress reports, a substantive change report, affiliate application(s) or other relevant submissions;
 - c. Continue the program's current accreditation but initiate an earlier reaccreditation review;
 - d. Recommend to the Board that it place the program on probation, at the next regular meeting or a special meeting, subject to appeal according to Policy 2.800; or
 - e. Recommend to the Board that it withdraw the program's accreditation, at the next regular meeting or a special meeting, subject to appeal in accordance with Policy 2.900.
7. In all instances, the executive director will send a letter to the complainant, the program director and the President/CEO of the institution, informing them of the disposition of the complaint.
8. The JRCNMT maintains a permanent master list of all complaints and retains the file on a complaint until the program's next review for continued accreditation is complete.

CAHEA: Adopted Oct 1978; revised Jan 1984, Oct 1988, May 1990.

JRCNMT: Revised Nov 1994, Nov 1995, March 2000, Nov 2010, Nov 2022.