Policy
Procedure
College Standard
Standard Operating Procedure
Guideline
Local Practice

Procedure Title	Procedure Number	
Issue Resolution and Investigation Procedure	**AD-HR-1.10**	
Executive Responsible	Administrator Responsible	
Vice President Finance & Corporate Services	**Director of Human Resources**	
Approving Body	Approval Date	Date of Next Review
Executive Committee	**October 30, 2026**	**October 2027**
Associated Policy and Resources		
Prevention of Discrimination, Bullying and Harassment Policy Complaint Resolution Form		

PURPOSE

This procedure outlines the process for receiving, assessing, investigating, and resolving concerns and complaints involving alleged conduct that may breach applicable College policy, bylaw or standard. It provides for a procedure to address concerns in a fair, timely, and consistent manner.

SCOPE

This procedure serves as the reporting, resolution, and investigation process for complaints arising under the following policies:

a) *Employee Code of Conduct Policy*
b) *Prevention of Discrimination, Bullying, and Harassment Policy*
c) *Equity, Diversity, Inclusion, and Belonging (EDIB) Policy* (under development), and
d) Other applicable College Policies, Bylaws, and Standards

This procedure applies where a College employee is a Complainant or Respondent, including Complaints involving an employee and another College employee, student, contractor, volunteer, or member of the CNC Board of Governors.

Any person may bring alleged conduct that may fall within the scope of this procedure to the attention of the College. Where the person reporting the conduct is not the individual who experienced it, the College will determine whether further action is appropriate.

Complaints that do not involve employees, such as student-to-student complaints, are not within the scope of this procedure and are addressed through the applicable student policies

and procedures, including:

a) Student Complaint Resolution

b) Student Non-Academic Conduct, or

c) Student Sexual Misconduct Policy.

Service-related issues raised by students are not within the scope of these procedures and are addressed through the *Student Complaint Resolution Policy*.

Where a Complaint involves a bargaining unit employee as either the Complainant or the Respondent, and if the terms of their collective agreement apply to the circumstances, the collective agreement provisions will prevail as appropriate, unless otherwise agreed by the College and applicable union.

PROCEDURE

1. Informal Resolution Process

1.1 Where appropriate, members of the College community are encouraged to resolve concerns at the earliest opportunity through respectful dialogue. Where appropriate and where they feel comfortable doing so, individuals should first attempt to resolve a concern through a private, respectful discussion with the other party or parties involved to express the concern and explore possible solutions.

2. Supported Resolution Process (Informal)

2.1 If the concern is not resolved through the informal resolution process, or if the individual is uncomfortable proceeding in that way, the individual may bring the matter forward to their designated administrator for support resolving the concern.

a) Concerns involving a student will include the appropriate educational administrator responsible for the student's program or area, or their designate.

2.2 When a concern is brought forward to a designated administrator, they will work with the individuals involved to seek a resolution. This may include hearing concerns, clarifying expectations, facilitating respectful dialogue, and exploring potential solutions.

2.3 Where more than one employee is involved and the employees have different designated administrators, the designated administrators will coordinate efforts to support a fair and constructive resolution.

2.4 Designated administrators may seek guidance from Human Resources at any stage of the process.

2.5 Administrators who are made aware of concerns involving alleged discrimination, bullying, harassment, or sexual misconduct must reach out to the Director of Human Resources (HR) or designate immediately for guidance.

3. Mediation (Informal)

3.1 At any time, the College may propose, or an individual involved in a concern or Complaint may request, mediation involving a neutral third party.

3.2 The College will only designate a mediator if all parties voluntarily consent to participate in mediation.

3.3 Participation in any informal resolution process under this procedure does not prevent the College from conducting a review or investigation, or taking other action, where required by legal or College policy or where the College otherwise determines that further action is appropriate. The College may proceed notwithstanding that an informal resolution process has been discontinued or has resulted in a resolution between the individuals involved.

3.4 Where mediation results in an agreed resolution, the terms of the resolution may be documented. Any term that requires action, approval, resources, or another commitment by the College is subject to College approval before taking effect.

4. Formal Resolution Process

4.1 The formal resolution process begins when the complainant submits a *Complaint Resolution Form* (a "Complaint") to the Director of HR or designate. If the Director of HR is a Respondent to the Complaint, the Complaint should be submitted to the President.

4.2 A Complaint may be submitted at any point including before, during or after any of the informal processes have taken place.

4.3 A Complaint must be submitted in writing using the *Complaint Resolution Form*. Complainants are required to include sufficient detail to allow the College to understand the concern and determine appropriate next steps for resolution or investigation.

5. Timeline for Submitting a Complaint

5.1 A Complaint should be submitted as soon as reasonably possible after the alleged incident or last occurrence, or after the completion of the unsuccessful informal resolution procedures.

5.2 Normally, Complaints should be submitted no later than thirty (30) business days after the incident or last occurrence to support timely review and resolution.

5.3 The Director of HR may accept a Complaint submitted outside this timeframe if satisfied that:

a) the delay occurred in good faith and no substantial prejudice will result to any party because of the delay; or

b) a trauma-informed assessment of the circumstances indicates that the Complainant's ability to file a Complaint within the prescribed timeline was reasonably affected by the alleged conduct or its impacts and that accepting the Complaint would not breach the principles of procedural fairness and natural justice of those involved.

6. Initial Review of Complaint

6.1 Upon receiving a Complaint, the Director of HR or designate will conduct an initial review to determine whether the Complaint includes sufficient information to proceed and may request additional details from the complainant if needed.

6.2 The Director of HR or designate will determine whether the Complaint falls within the scope of this procedure and, if necessary, redirect the complainant to or treat the Complaint as a complaint under another applicable policy or procedure.

a) If the Director of HR or designate determines that the Complaint falls within the scope of this procedure, they will initiate an investigation as outlined in section 9.1.

6.3 Where the Respondent is a volunteer, the appropriate designated administrator responsible for the volunteer or the area in which they serve will oversee the investigation and any required follow-up, in consultation with the Director of HR or designate.

6.4 Where the Respondent is a supplier or contractor, the Director of HR or designate, in consultation with the designated administrator, will work with the CNC Procurement Department or external agency to determine the appropriate process for investigation and resolution.

6.5 Where the Director of HR or designate receives an anonymous Complaint, they will review it to assess whether it indicates a significant risk to the health, safety, or well-being of a member(s) of the College community and will decide whether or not to act on it. If so, the College may initiate an investigation in accordance with this procedure or may take different steps as it deems appropriate.

7. Complaints That Do Not Proceed

7.1 Following the initial review, the Director of HR or designate may determine that a Complaint will not proceed under this procedure if:

a) the Complaint does not include sufficient information to allow the College to understand the concern, identify the alleged conduct, or determine appropriate next steps, and the Complainant has been given a reasonable opportunity to provide additional information to address the insufficiency and has not done so; or

b) they determine the Complaint to be frivolous, vexatious, or made in bad faith.

7.2 If the Director of HR or designate determines that a Complaint will not proceed, the Complainant will be notified in writing, with reasons, normally within ten (10) business days of the decision.

7.3 Complaints made in good faith will not result in adverse consequences to the Complainant simply because the Complaint does not proceed.

7.4 Where there is evidence that these procedures have been deliberately misused,

including where a Complaint is frivolous, vexatious, or made in bad faith, the College may take appropriate corrective action in accordance with applicable College policy, collective agreements, employment contracts, or other applicable processes.

8. Interim Measures

8.1 The College may implement interim measures to mitigate risk, protect the health or safety of individuals, and/or limit potential contact at any stage under the procedure. Interim measures are temporary, not punitive and do not represent a prejudging of a Complaint.

a) At the informal stages of this procedure, the designated administrator(s) will consider whether, and if so which, interim measures are appropriate in consultation with the Director HR or designate.

b) After a Complaint has been submitted, the Director of HR or designate will consider whether, and if so which, interim measures are appropriate in consultation with designated administrator(s) as needed.

8.2 Where the Complainant or Respondent is a student, the Director of Student Services will be consulted about any potential interim measures that may affect the student before they are implemented.

9. Initiating an Investigation

9.1 Where the Director of HR or designate concludes that a Complaint falls within the scope of this procedure and that the Complaint will proceed, the Director of HR or designate will initiate an investigation.

9.2 The investigation process will be determined by the Director of HR or designate. The investigator may be an internal or external investigator.

a) Where the investigation is conducted by an internal investigator, the investigation will normally commence within fourteen (14) business days of the decision of the Director of HR or designate that the Complaint will proceed and be completed within thirty (30) business days of the start of the investigation, unless circumstances require more time.

b) Where the investigation is conducted by an external investigator, the timeline for the investigation will be determined by the investigator.

9.3 Where the College determines necessary, the College may still proceed with an investigation where the Complaint is withdrawn or resolved.

9.4 The College may initiate or continue an investigation on its own initiative where it determines appropriate including where it becomes aware of alleged conduct that may create legal, safety, policy, workplace, or community risk.

10. Conducting the Investigation

10.1 Investigations will be conducted in accordance with the principles of natural

justice and procedural fairness.

10.2 Where a collective agreement includes specific provisions for investigating complaints, those provisions will prevail.

10.3 Where students are involved as Complainants, Respondents, or witnesses, the Director of HR or designate will consult with the Director of Student Services to ensure appropriate support is in place.

10.4 The Director of HR or designate will provide written notice to both the Complainant and Respondent that an investigation will be conducted, and, where students are involved, will consult with the designated administrator(s) and Director of Student Services prior to issuing notice.

10.5 The Respondent will be given sufficient information to understand the nature of the complaint and a fair opportunity to respond.

10.6 All individuals interviewed during the investigation process may have a support person present, provided that person is free of any actual or apparent conflict of interest and agrees to maintain confidentiality.

11. Investigation Report and Outcomes

11.1 At the conclusion of the investigation, the investigator will submit a written report to the Director of HR or designate. The report will include:

a) a description of the alleged incident(s) or conduct that form the basis of the Complaint;

b) a summary of the investigation process, analysis, and the investigator's findings; and

c) the investigator's assessment, on a balance of probabilities, of whether a College policy was breached.

11.2 The Director of HR or designate may seek clarification from the investigator regarding the report, including requesting additional information, correction of errors, or further analysis where needed to ensure completeness, accuracy, and alignment with the scope of the investigation. Where they do so, the investigator will maintain control over the contents of and conclusions in the report.

11.3 The Director of HR or designate will review the investigator's report and determine whether or not the Complaint is substantiated and/or a policy or standard has been violated.

11.4 The Director of HR or designate will communicate their determination of whether or not the Complaint is substantiated and/or a policy or standard has been violated to both the Complainant and the Respondent through a Letter of Determination, which will include a summary of findings.

11.5 The investigation report will be treated as confidential and will not be disclosed by the College except as required by law.

11.6 Records relating to Complaints and investigations under this procedure will be maintained securely by Human Resources in accordance with applicable privacy

legislation and the College's records retention requirements.

12. Sanctions

12.1 Where the Director of HR or designate determines that the Complaint is substantiated and/or a policy or standard has been violated and that sanctions would be appropriate, the Director of HR or designate, together with relevant College Administrators, will decide what sanctions to impose, which may be educative and/or disciplinary, and will coordinate implementation with the designated administrator or the Director of Student Services, as applicable.

a) Educative Sanctions: Support awareness and learning (e.g., coaching, reflective activity, restorative dialogue, letter of expectation, or additional training).

b) Disciplinary Sanctions: Address serious or repeated breaches, in accordance with collective agreements or contracts, and may include formal reprimand, verbal or written warning, suspension, or termination of employment.

12.2 All sanctions will be documented in employee personnel files or student files as applicable.

12.3 Where sanctions are imposed, those sanctions will only be communicated to the individual subject to the sanctions and not to other parties to the Complaint.

13. Appeal Process

13.1 The Complainant or Respondent may appeal the College's determination of whether or not a Complaint is substantiated and/or a policy or standard has been violated.

13.2 An appeal may be made on one or both of the following grounds:

a) a significant flaw in the College's process or procedures that may have affected the determination; or

b) new relevant evidence, not reasonably available at the time of determination, that may have affected the determination.

13.3 Appeals must be submitted in writing to the Vice President, Finance and Corporate Services, or if the College determines appropriate another Vice President, within ten (10) business days of receipt of the Letter of Determination.

13.4 The Vice President (or designate) hearing the appeal will conduct an initial review to determine whether the appeal asserts grounds for appeal within the scope of this appeal process.

a) If they conclude it does not, they will notify the person who submitted the appeal in writing, with reasons, within five (5) business days of receipt of the appeal and the appeal will not proceed.

b) If they conclude it does, they will notify the person who submitted the appeal in writing within five (5) business days of receipt of the appeal, and the appeal will proceed.

13.5 Where an appeal proceeds, the Vice President (or designate) hearing the appeal will review the appeal and may, at their discretion, seek additional information or clarification from the person who submitted the appeal or any other individual as they deem appropriate. The Vice President (or designate) hearing the appeal will normally issue a written appeal decision within fifteen (15) business days of confirming that the appeal will proceed under section 13.4, unless circumstances require more time. The Vice President (or designate) hearing the appeal will determine whether to grant or dismiss the appeal and may uphold, vary, or overturn the original determination.

13.6 The decision on appeal made pursuant to section 13.5 is final.

14. Appeal of Suspension Decisions

14.1 In accordance with Section 37 of the *BC College and Institute Act*, a student or employee who has been suspended by the President may appeal the decision to the College's Board of Governors.

14.2 Appeals of suspension decisions must be made pursuant to the Appeal of Suspension to the Board of Governors Policy and may not be appealed under this procedure.

15. Multiple Proceedings

15.1 Nothing in this Procedure precludes an individual from taking action or seeking a remedy available to them under any applicable law relating to the substance of a Complaint.

15.2 Where an individual does so, the College, at its discretion, may choose to continue, hold in abeyance, defer, or suspend any/all steps in this procedure while the external process remains outstanding.

16. Conflict of Interest

16.1 If the College determines that a person in a position identified in this procedure as having a role in administering the Complaint has, or could reasonably be perceived as having, a conflict of interest, the College will designate another individual to fulfill that role.

17. Annual Review

17.1 This Procedure will be reviewed at least annually and updated as required.

Definitions and Acronyms	
Alleged Conduct	Refers to the behaviour, action, or omission that is the subject of a Complaint or investigation under a College policy. The term "alleged" is used to acknowledge that the conduct has not been substantiated or proven at the time of reporting.

Balance of Probabilities	The evidence-based standard of proof used by the College to determine whether a policy breach has occurred. To meet this standard, the evidence must show it is more likely than not that the Respondent engaged in the alleged conduct.
Complainant	The person who alleges that they experienced conduct that may constitute a breach of an applicable College policy, bylaw, or standard and who submits a Complaint under this procedure. The College may act as the Complainant in appropriate circumstances.
Complaint	A written allegation submitted through the Complaint Resolution Form that conduct may have breached an applicable College policy, bylaw, or standard.
Conflict of Interest	A circumstance in which a person involved in administering, investigating, or deciding a matter under this procedure has an actual or apparent interest, relationship, or involvement that could reasonably call their impartiality into question.
Designated Administrator	Refers to the employee with appropriate managerial or administrative authority over the individuals or area involved in a Complaint. The designated administrator may be a Dean, Director, Manager, or other administrative employee who has the authority to act as provided for in this procedure.
Employee	For the purpose of this procedure, an employee means any person employed by the College, including regular, term, full-time, part-time, casual, and contract employees. This includes employees covered by a collective agreement and excluded or administrative employees. For clarity, students, contractors, volunteers, and members of the Board of Governors are not considered employees unless they are also employed directly by the College.
Interim Measures	Temporary actions or restrictions put in place to protect individuals or the College community during an investigation or review process. These measures are not punitive in nature, but rather protective actions to reduce harm. Interim measures. Examples of possible interim measures as provided for in this procedure include, but are not limited to: a) the exclusion of individuals from all or any part of the College campus; b) limiting proximity or contact with specific individuals; c) limiting participation in College activities; d) restricting access to the College's information and communications technology; e) placement on administrative leave; f) requiring regular meetings with designated College administrators; g) assigning supervisory responsibilities to another Employee; or h) any other interim measure determined appropriate by the College.

Mediation	A voluntary and confidential process in which a neutral third party (the mediator) facilitates structured dialogue between the Complainant and Respondent to support mutual understanding and assist the parties in reaching a mutually acceptable resolution. The mediator does not make decisions or impose outcomes. Participation in mediation requires the consent of all parties and may be discontinued at any time.
Members of the College Community	Includes students, employees, board members, contractors, and volunteers.
Principles of Natural Justice	The procedural fairness requirements applicable to a matter, including an appropriate opportunity to know and respond to the allegations and to have the matter decided impartially.
Respondent	The person or persons against whom a Complaint has been submitted.
Support Person	An individual chosen by an employee or student to accompany them to meetings during the Complaint resolution process. The support person does not act or speak on behalf of the individual but provides advice and personal support. The support person must not be in a position of conflict of interest and must maintain confidentiality regarding information shared during the process.
Student	A person registered in any course or program offered by the College. Persons are still considered students for the purpose of this policy if they have informed the College that they are on a scheduled program break but expect to return in the near future.
Supporting Information	
Related Policies, Forms, Documents, Websites	Employee Code of Conduct AD-HR-1.31 Employee Ethics & Conflict of Interest Policy AD-HR-1.05 Equity, Diversity, Inclusion, and Belonging (EDIB) Policy (In development) Faculty Local & Common Collective Agreement CUPE Collective Agreement Student Complaint Resolution Policy E-1.27 Student (Non-Academic) Conduct Policy E-1.45 Student Sexual Misconduct Policy E-1.41
Acts and Regulations	B.C. College and Institute Act B.C. Human Rights Code