

## ***Complaints Against NWCCU Policy***

Persons who are aggrieved as a direct result of acts or omissions by the Commission related to its accreditation functions may file a complaint with the Commission. Complaints must be submitted in writing (on paper) with an original inked signature to the Chair of the Commission at the NWCCU office address. Electronic submissions are not acceptable. The complaint must describe the circumstances showing that the complainant has been aggrieved as a result of the Commission's acts or omissions related to its accreditation functions. Concern that a Commission action was not in accord with the complainant's expectations is not in and of itself cause for review of the complaint.

### Procedures for Handling Complaints

- a. Within 15 business days after receipt by the Commission, the Chair will acknowledge its receipt and may request further information regarding the particulars of the complaint. If further information is requested, the Chair may defer further action until an adequate response is received.
- b. If the Chair is a direct subject of the complaint, all actions under this policy to be taken by the Chair may be delegated to an individual who is not a direct subject of the complaint.
- c. If the complaint, or other information received, adequately demonstrates that the complainant is aggrieved as a result of the Commission's acts or omissions related to its accreditation functions, the Chair or designee shall appoint a Review Committee of three (3) College and University Presidents from regionally accredited institutions in the Northwest region to review the complaint and to recommend a course of action to the Chair of the Commission. The Review Committee may not include any sitting NWCCU Commissioners or any other persons who, either individually or in their institutional capacity, are direct subjects of the complaint or who may be otherwise involved in a way that, in the discretion of the Chair, would constitute a disqualifying conflict of interest.
- d. The Committee shall review the complaint and any additional information furnished by the complainant. It may also gather other information regarding the circumstances related to the complaint as, in its discretion, the Committee sees fit. Presumptively, the Committee should complete its review within 45 days after its formation, provided that if more than 45 days is needed, the Committee may request that the Chair or designee grant additional time.
- e. Within 15 business days after receipt of the Committee's recommendation, the Chair or designee will review the Committee's recommendation and shall thereafter consult with the President of the Commission with respect to the appropriate disposition of the complaint. If the President of the Commission is the subject of the complaint, the Chair may consult with Commissioners. Within 10 business days after these consultations, the Chair shall notify the complainant in writing of the Commission's conclusions and actions, if any, with respect to the complaint.