

DODGE CITY COMMUNITY COLLEGE
2501 North 14th Avenue
Dodge City, Kansas 67801

Dodge City Community College Complaints Policy and Procedure (Kansas)*

***This Complaints Policy and Procedure is intended for students attending DC3 in Kansas.**

General: Dodge City Community College is committed to providing quality services for its constituencies in an open and accountable manner that builds the trust and respect of all our stakeholders. One of the ways in which we can continue to improve our services is by listening and responding to the views of our members, students, and stakeholders, and in particular by responding positively to complaints, and by putting errors right.

Therefore we aim to ensure that we:

- Handle a complaint as easy as possible;
- Treat a complaint as a clear expression of dissatisfaction with our services which calls for an immediate response;
- Deal with it promptly, politely, and confidently;
- Respond in the right way – for example, with an explanation, or an apology when we have things wrong, or provide information on any action taken;
- Learn from complaints, use them to improve services, and review them annually.

We recognize that concerns may be raised informally and dealt with quickly. In these cases, our aim is to:

- Resolve informal complaints quickly;
- Keep matters low-key;
- Enable mediation between the complainant and the individual to whom the complaint is referred.

Resolution of an informal complaint with a low-key approach is appropriate when it can be achieved. If concerns cannot be satisfactorily resolved informally, formal complaints procedures will be followed.

Preamble:

Definition: Dodge City Community College defines a complaint as “any expression of dissatisfaction that relates to Dodge City Community College and that requires a formal response.”

Purpose: The formal complaints procedure is intended to ensure that all complaints are handled fairly, consistently, and whenever possible, resolved to the complainant’s satisfaction.

Dodge City Community College Responsibilities:

- Acknowledge a formal complaint in writing;
- Respond within a stated timeline;
- Deal reasonably and sensitively with the complaint;
- Take action when appropriate.

Complainant Responsibilities:

- Raise the complaint, in writing, to the Dodge City Community College Dean of Students within ten (10) days of the situation leading to the complaint;
- Allow Dodge City Community College a reasonable amount of time to investigate the circumstances leading to the complaint;
- Recognize that some circumstances may be beyond Dodge City Community College's control.

Responsibility for Actionable Resolution: The Dodge City Community College administration, staff, and faculty are responsible for actionable resolution of a complaint.

Confidentiality: Except in rare circumstances, every attempt will be made to ensure that both the complainant and Dodge City Community College maintain confidentiality. In some cases, the circumstances leading to the complaint may be of such a public nature that confidentiality is not possible to maintain. Each complaint will be considered on its own merits and the complainant will be informed if it is not possible to maintain confidentiality.

Monitoring and Reporting: Dodge City Community College trustees, administration, staff, and faculty will receive an annual anonymized report of complaints and attendant resolutions no later than July 31st for the immediate past academic year.

Formal Complaints Procedure:

Stage One:

- If a complainant is unable to resolve a circumstance informally, he/she may write to the Dodge City Community College Dean of Students.
- If the complaint involves a trustee, the written communication should be sent to the trustee.
- In the written communication, the complaint and the resulting consequences experienced by the complainant should be stated in detail.
- The written complaint will be acknowledged within five (5) working days.
- The complainant will receive a written response and an explanation of findings within fifteen (15) working days.
- Stage One complaints can be sent to: The Dodge City Community College Dean of Students, 2501 North 14th Avenue, Dodge City, Kansas 67801.

Stage Two:

- If the complainant is not satisfied with the initial response to the complaint, he/she may write to the Dodge City Community College Executive Vice President/Chief Academic Officer requesting a review of the complaint.
- The Executive Vice President/Chief Academic Officer will acknowledge receipt of the complaint within five (5) working days.
- The Executive Vice President/Chief Academic Office will provide a written response to the complaint within fifteen (15) working days.
- Stage Two Complaints can be sent to: The Dodge City Community College Executive Vice President/Chief Academic Office, 2501 North 14th Avenue, Dodge City, Kansas 67801.

Final Stage:

- If the complainant is not satisfied with the response from the Executive Vice President/Chief Academic Officer, he/she may write to the Dodge City Community College President stating the reasons for the dissatisfaction with the response.
- This action must be taken within ten (10) days of receipt of the Executive Vice President/Chief Academic Officer's response.
- The Dodge City Community College President will acknowledge receipt of the complaint within five (5) working days.
- The Dodge City Community College President will provide a written response to the complaint within fifteen (15) working days.
- The decision of the Dodge City Community College President is final.

Complaints Related to the Americans with Disabilities Act or Employment Discrimination:

Complainants with specific claims related to the Americans with Disabilities Act or employment discrimination should seek prior review of such claims by the appropriate state and federal agencies.

Complaints to the Higher Learning Commission (HLC):

Dodge City Community College is accredited by the regional accrediting association known as the Higher Learning Commission of the National Association of Colleges and Secondary Schools. There is no HLC complaint form. Individuals interested in bringing an appropriate complaint to the attention of the HLC should take some time to compile a complete submission as outlined below:

- Write a cover letter to HLC containing a brief narrative of the facts of the complaint. In most cases, such a narrative need be no longer than a few pages.
- Indicate in your complaint why you believe the issues raised in your complaint are accrediting issues. If possible, please review the HLC's "Criteria for Accreditation" prior to writing your complaint. You should also indicate how

you believe the HLC can assist you with your complaint. Remember that the HLC cannot assist you in understanding your tuition bill, arranging for a refund of tuition, obtaining a higher grade for a course, seeking reimbursement for an academic program, and other such issues.

- Attach documentation to support your narrative whenever possible. (For example, if you make reference in your complaint to an institutional policy, include a copy of the policy with your complaint.) Helpful documentation might include relevant portions of the institution catalog, letters or email correspondence, and learning agreements between you and the institution.
- A few reminders...
 - Please type your complaint or print very neatly.
 - Please do not use abbreviations or nicknames.
 - Sign and date the cover letter.
 - Include contact information with a street address for future correspondence.
 - If you are writing on behalf of someone else, be sure to provide that person's consent, in writing, to allow you to communicate to HLC on that person's behalf.
- Make the letter and its attachments to the HLC office at 230 South LaSalle Street, Suite 7-500, Chicago, IL 60604-1413. The HLC does not have an online complaint system and does not accept complaints via email.

Please note that the HLC will not consider those complaints that are not in writing and do not contain the elements noted above. The HLC's complaint policy precludes it from considering matters more than five (5) years old.

The HLC will acknowledge your complaint within thirty (30) days of receiving it and let you know whether your complaint is complete and whether it raises issues that are related to accrediting requirements or whether it is an individual dispute outside the jurisdiction of the HLC's complaint policy.