

Saint Mary's University of Minnesota

Grievance and Appeal Process: ADA and Section 504

Saint Mary's University of Minnesota has adopted the following policy for grievances relating to accommodation decisions or disability discrimination. The Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (the ADA) and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (the Rehabilitation Act) prohibit the university from excluding people from participation in its educational programs or activities based on their disability, from denying them the benefits of such programs or activities, and from discriminating against such individuals.

Students have the right to file a complaint directly with the Office of Civil Rights (OCR) of the United States Department of Education (DOE).

Appeal relating to accommodation decisions

1. When a student does not agree with an accommodation decision, he/she is encouraged to discuss his/her concern with the Director of Access Services (College) or the Access Services Coordinator [Schools of Graduate and Professional Programs(SGPP)] within five (5) business days from the date of the accommodation decision. The complaint can be submitted either in writing (hard copy or electronic) or communicated verbally.
2. If the student does not agree with the decision of the Director of Access Services or the Access Services Coordinator regarding the accommodation decision, the student may appeal the decision in writing to the Dean of Student Success (College) or the Associate Vice President for Enrollment Management and Student Services (SGPP) within ten (10) business days from the date of the decision. The Dean or the Associate Vice President will communicate his/her decision to the student in writing within ten (10) business days from the date the appeal was received.
3. If the student does not agree with the Dean's or the Associate Vice President's decision, the student may appeal the decision in writing to the Associate Vice Presidents for Academic Affairs at the College or SGPP, as appropriate. The Associate Vice Presidents for Academic Affairs will communicate his/her decision to the student in writing within ten (10) business days from the date of the appeal. The decision on appeal exhausts the student's administrative remedies. Should the student not be satisfied with the outcome of the appeal, the student may utilize the external complaint process as outlined in "External Grievances/Complaint Procedure" below.

Grievance relating to discrimination complaint

A student whose complaint concerns discrimination on the basis of disability or perception of disability is encouraged to use one of the following for assistance:

1. Call, write or meet with the Director of Access Services or the Access Services Coordinator.
2. Use the procedure outlined in the university's Discrimination Policy.
3. Call, write or meet with the University's designated Section 504/ADA Coordinator.

University personnel will respect a student's request for privacy but may not be able to ensure confidentiality in resolving the complaint.

Filing a Complaint with the Office of Civil Rights (OCR)

Saint Mary's University of Minnesota encourages students to use the university procedures before pursuing remedies outside the university. Students have the right to file a complaint directly with the Office of Civil Rights (OCR) of the United States Department of Education (DOE). Complaints can be filed by:

Online: Students may file a complaint with OCR using OCR's electronic complaint form at the following website:

<http://www.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/complaintintro.html>.

Mail or Facsimile: Students may mail or send by facsimile information to the address or phone number available at [this link](#). You may use OCR's Discrimination Complaint Form or write your own letter. If you write your own letter, please include:

- Your name, address and, if possible (although not required), a telephone number where the complainant may be reached during business hours;
- Information about the person(s) or class of persons injured by the alleged discriminatory act(s) (names of the injured person(s) are not required);
- The name and location (city and state) of the institution that committed the alleged discriminatory act(s); and
- A description of the alleged discriminatory act(s) in sufficient detail to enable OCR to understand what occurred, when it occurred, and the basis for the alleged discrimination.

Email: Students may email OCR's Discrimination Complaint Form or their own signed letter to ocr@ed.gov. Please include the information identified above.