

SARA Student Complaint Process

a. Complaints against an institution operating under SARA policies go first through the institution's own procedures for resolution of grievances. Allegations of criminal offenses or alleged violations of a state's general-purpose laws may be made directly to the relevant state agencies.

b. Complaints regarding student grades or student conduct violations are governed entirely by institutional policy and the laws of the SARA institution's home state.

c. If the complainant is not satisfied with the outcome of the institution's complaint process, the resolution of the complaint (except for complaints about grades or student conduct violations) may be appealed, within two years of the incident about which the complaint is made, to the SARA State Portal Entity of the home state of the institution or to the SARA State Portal Entity of the state in which the student is located.

The SARA State Portal Entity that receives the appeal shall notify the SARA State Portal Entity of the institution's home state and provide to the student the contact information of the SARA State Portal Entity of the institution's home state. The resolution of the complaint appeal by the institution's home state SARA State Portal Entity, through its SARA complaint resolution process, will be final, except for complaints that fall under the provision "g" below.

d. The SARA State Portal Entity of the institution's home state shall communicate its final resolution of a complaint appeal to the student and to the SARA State Portal Entity of the state where the student was located at the time of the incident leading to the complaint, if known.

e. While final resolution of complaints (for purposes of adjudication of the complaint and enforcement of any resultant remedies or redress) resides in certain cases with institutions (complaints about grades or student conduct violations), or more generally with the relevant institution's home state SARA State Portal Entity (all other complaints), the regional compact(s) administering SARA may consider a disputed complaint as a "case file" if concerns are raised against a SARA member state with regard to whether that state is abiding by SARA policies, as promulgated in the *SARA Policy Manual*. The regional compact may review such institutional concerns in determining whether a state under its SARA purview is abiding by SARA policies. Similarly, a complaint "case file" may also be reviewed by NC-SARA in considering whether a regional compact is ensuring that its SARA member states are abiding by the SARA policies required for their membership in SARA.

f. SARA State Portal Entities shall report quarterly to NC-SARA the number and disposition of appealed complaints that are not resolved at the institutional level. NC-SARA shall make that information publicly available on its website. Such data will create transparency and can be used in determining whether a regional compact is ensuring that its SARA member states and those states' institutions are abiding by the policies required for state membership and institutional participation in SARA.

g. Nothing in the *SARA Policy Manual* precludes a state from using its laws of general application to pursue action against an institution that violates those laws.

HOW TO

FILE A SARA STUDENT COMPLAINT

KEY

SPE = State Portal Entity

SARA = State Authorization Reciprocity Agreements

I HAVE A COMPLAINT ABOUT VIOLATIONS OF SARA POLICY. WHAT SHOULD I DO?



First, file a complaint with your institution



WAS YOUR COMPLAINT RESOLVED?

NO



I WANT TO FILE A COMPLAINT WITH THE STATE

You may now file a complaint with the institution's SARA SPE.
Contact the SPE of your institution's home state

Start with the NC-SARA Institution Directory on the NC-SARA website

Select the home state of your institution

The SPE contact will be on the right side of this webpage



WHAT HAPPENS NEXT?

The institution's home state SARA SPE has final authority in SARA complaints

Institution's home state SARA SPE notifies your location's SARA SPE.



Process ends

HOW DO I CHECK FOR SARA COMPLAINTS?

Quarterly, SARA SPEs report the status of complaints to NC-SARA.
Complaint reports are listed on NC-SARA website