

WAC 172-121-100 Complaints. (1) Filing of complaints.

(a) Any person may file a complaint against a student or student organization for violation of the student conduct code.

(b) A person wishing to file a complaint under the student conduct code must submit the complaint, in writing, to one of the following:

(i) Student rights and responsibilities; or

(ii) The office of the dean of students.

(c) Filing a complaint under the student conduct code does not prohibit or limit a person's right to file complaints or charges with other civil and/or criminal authorities for violations of local, county, state, or federal law.

(d) All student conduct code complaints will be forwarded to the director of SRR for further review and action.

(e) In cases where the university is acting as the complainant, an EWU employee shall initiate the complaint.

(2) Complaint review. Upon receipt of a complaint, the director of SRR shall review the complaint to determine whether it includes allegations of sexual misconduct and/or criminal conduct that will require special processing under subsection (3) of this section and whether appropriate law enforcement or other authorities should be notified. The director of SRR shall also review the complaint to determine whether the allegations may lead to a possible sanction of suspension, expulsion, or if the allegations rise to the level of a felony under Washington criminal law. All allegations that may lead to a possible suspension, expulsion, or that rise to the level of felony sexual misconduct under Washington criminal law shall be referred for a university investigation and full hearing under WAC 172-121-122.

(3) Sexual misconduct proceedings. Except where specifically stated, this section applies to all allegations the university receives of sexual misconduct regardless of the possible level of sanction or where the alleged acts occurred.

(a) Report to Title IX coordinator. The director of SRR shall report all complaints which may constitute any form of sexual misconduct to the university Title IX coordinator within twenty-four hours.

(b) Prompt resolution. The university shall investigate any complaint alleging sexual misconduct when it is legally required to do so to determine if the university will pursue the incident under this student conduct code and/or refer the incident to other departments or agencies for further criminal, civil, or disciplinary action. All allegations of sexual misconduct shall be promptly investigated and resolved.

(c) Confidentiality. To facilitate the investigative process and protect the privacy of those involved, all information will be maintained in a confidential manner to the fullest extent permissible by law. During an investigation, complaint information will be disseminated on a need-to-know basis. If the complainant wishes to remain anonymous, the university will take all reasonable steps to investigate the allegation without disclosing the name of the complainant to the extent allowed by state and federal law. If the complainant wishes to remain anonymous, the university shall inform them that its ability to investigate and respond to the allegation will be limited. The university cannot ensure confidentiality, as its legal obligations under federal or state law may require investigation of the allegation and possible disclosure of the complainant's name. Reports of crimes to the campus community shall not include the names of the complainants.

Files subject to public disclosure will be released to the extent required by law.

(d) Right to file a criminal report. Once the university is notified of an allegation of sexual misconduct, it will notify the potential complainant of their right to file a criminal complaint with campus or local law enforcement. If the complainant in such circumstances wishes to report the conduct to local law enforcement, the university will assist them in doing so. The university will also notify the complainant that he or she is not required to file a report with local law enforcement. The university will report allegations of sexual misconduct to law enforcement or other authorities consistent with federal, state, and local law.

(4) Interim measures and interim restrictions. During the complaint review, the director of SRR will review whether any interim measures or interim restrictions are needed. Interim measures and interim restrictions are addressed in WAC 172-121-140.

(5) SRR will follow up with the parties as described below.

(a) For cases other than sexual misconduct, the director of SRR will contact the parties and provide them with the following information:

(i) The parties' rights under the student conduct code;

(ii) A summary of the allegations the complainant has against the respondent;

(iii) The potential conduct code violations related to the allegations; and

(iv) How to report any subsequent problems or retaliation, including intimidation, threats, coercion, or discrimination.

(b) In all cases alleging sexual misconduct, the director of SRR will, in addition to the information specified under (a) of this subsection, provide both parties with written information that will include, at a minimum:

(i) The student's rights and options, including options to avoid contact with the other party; a list of available university and community resources for counseling, health, mental health, victim advocacy, legal assistance, visa and immigration assistance, student financial aid, and other academic and housing services at the university and in the community; and options for, available assistance in, and how to request changes to academic, living, transportation, and working situations or protective measures;

(ii) The importance of preserving evidence of the alleged incident and procedures to follow to preserve evidence of the alleged incident;

(iii) Who will receive a report of the allegation;

(iv) Their right to file or not file a criminal complaint as detailed above and the ability to be assisted by campus authorities in notifying law enforcement authorities if the complainant wishes to do so;

(v) A list of resources for obtaining protective, no contact, restraining, or similar orders, if applicable;

(vi) The procedures the university will follow when determining if discipline is appropriate;

(vii) Steps the university will take to ensure confidentiality of complainants and other necessary parties and the limits this may place on the university's ability to investigate and respond, as set forth above; and

(viii) Information regarding the university's policy against retaliation, steps the university will take to prevent and respond to

any retaliation, and how the student should report retaliation or new incidents.

(6) Following the complaint review, the director of SRR will either dismiss the matter or arrange a preliminary conference.

(a) Dismiss the matter. If the director of SRR determines the allegations, even if true, would not rise to the level of a conduct violation, he/she may dismiss the matter. In such cases, the director of SRR will prepare a written record of the dismissal. The director of SRR will also notify the complainant of their decision, if such notification is permissible under FERPA. The dismissal letter, along with the original complaint and any other related documents, will be maintained as described in WAC 172-121-080. In cases of sexual misconduct, the complainant may request a review of the dismissal by the dean of students by filing a request for review with the director of SRR within seven business days of receiving notice of the dismissal.

(b) Preliminary conference. If the director of SRR does not dismiss the matter he/she will arrange a preliminary conference as described in WAC 172-121-110.

[Statutory Authority: RCW 28B.35.120(12). WSR 20-01-032, § 172-121-100, filed 12/6/19, effective 1/6/20. Statutory Authority: RCW 28B.35.120(12) and 42.56.070. WSR 19-01-047, § 172-121-100, filed 12/13/18, effective 1/13/19. Statutory Authority: RCW 28B.35.120(12). WSR 17-17-031, § 172-121-100, filed 8/9/17, effective 9/9/17; WSR 15-24-050, § 172-121-100, filed 11/23/15, effective 12/24/15; WSR 13-24-123, § 172-121-100, filed 12/4/13, effective 1/4/14; WSR 09-12-001, § 172-121-100, filed 5/20/09, effective 6/20/09.]