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## ADMINISTRATIVE REGULATION AND PROCEDURE

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Title: COMPLAINT RESOLUTION PROCESS FOR EMPLOYEES AND STUDENTS	Code: CC0200-A
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Policy Reference: C0200, C0201, C0202

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Milwaukee Area Technical College is committed to creating and maintaining a complaint procedure that is transparent, objective, and adheres to relevant laws, regulations, and Board policies including C0200 and C0701. Clear documentation, communication, and confidentiality are essential for ensuring a fair and effective complaint resolution process.

The following overview of the complaint process was developed collaboratively by members of the Office of Human Resources, the Office of General Counsel, Student Complaints Administration, and the Office of Judicial Affairs. This process will be reviewed (see #7) by March 1 of each year for improvement purposes.

### 1. Communicate Complaint Submission Process with Employees and Students

- Throughout the year, Complaint Officers will ensure the following:

- Promoting multiple channels for submitting complaints, such as the online Maxient form, [matchumanresources@matc.edu](mailto:matchumanresources@matc.edu); [titleix@matc.edu](mailto:titleix@matc.edu); or in-person reporting, and the types of complaints that can be reported (e.g., discrimination, harassment, policy violations, academic grievances, workplace issues) via the Week Ahead and/or HR Newsletters for employees and in the Student Code of Conduct for students
- Allowing for anonymous reporting and ensuring the identity of the complainant is protected if desired
- Requiring basic information in the complaint form, such as the names of the parties involved, dates, locations, and a detailed description of the incident(s)

### 2. Intake and Initial Review

- Appropriate Complaint Officer (depending if complaint comes employee or student) conducts initial review of submission to determine the nature and severity of the complaint as well as any immediate actions that may be necessary (e.g., temporary suspension, separation of parties, safety measures) and acknowledges receipt of the complaint within 1-2 business days, noting one of the following three actions:

- For academic complaints, complaint is referred to Academic Leadership (Dean or Associate Dean) for follow up;
- For student conduct complaints, complaint is referred to the Office of Judicial Affairs
- For other student or employee complaints that do not rise to the level of a formal investigation, complaint is referred to employee or student Ombuds Office for resolution;



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- For other student and employee complaints that do meet the criteria for formal investigation, a reference number and contact information for the assigned investigator or HR representative is included in the acknowledgment.
- For formal investigations, the complaint is categorized (e.g., discrimination, harassment, workplace conflict, Employee Handbook or policy violation) and the appropriate investigation process and policies to follow are determined.

### **3. Investigation**

- Complaint Officer assigns a trained, impartial investigator or investigation team to gather relevant information and evidence. Assigned investigator may be internal or external (outside legal counsel).
  - The assigned investigator(s) creates a case file in Maxient.
- The investigator(s) interviews the complainant, the accused party, and any witnesses or relevant parties individually and in a private setting. If the complainant or respondent does not respond within 15 work days from the date of submission, the investigator can either close out the complaint, or investigate the matter with the information that has been provided and may make a final determination.
- The investigator(s) reviews any documents, emails, text messages, social media posts, or other materials related to the complaint.
  - The investigator(s) collects and preserves any physical evidence, if applicable.
- The investigator(s) maintains detailed documentation throughout the investigation process, including interview notes, evidence logs, and chronological records of events.
- The investigator(s) ensures that the investigation is conducted promptly, typically within 60-90 days, depending on the complexity of the case.

### **4. Findings and Recommendations**

- Based on the investigation and evidence gathered, the investigator(s) determines if the complaint is substantiated or unsubstantiated.
  - If the complaint is substantiated, the investigator(s) recommends\* appropriate corrective actions or disciplinary measures according to established policies and procedures (e.g., termination, suspension, training, counseling, policy changes).
  - The investigator(s) prepares a comprehensive final report documenting the findings, recommendations, and supporting evidence and submits this report to the VP of Human Resources (HR) and the Office of General Counsel (OGC) for final review ) to ensure compliance with policies and regulations.
  - Once approved by VP-HR and OGC, the investigator(s) reviews the report with relevant stakeholders (complainant and respondent) (see #5 below)
  - If not approved, the final report returns to the investigator for follow up and resubmission for approval.

### **5. Resolution and Communication**



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- The investigator(s) schedules separate meetings with the complainant and respondent, with advocates when appropriate, to communicate the outcome and any corrective actions or disciplinary measures, including but not limited to:
  - Providing clear explanations for the findings and the rationale behind the decisions made.
  - Implementing corrective actions or disciplinary measures promptly and consistently.
  - Offering support resources, such as counseling, mediation, or training, to the involved parties as needed.
- The investigator(s) maintains confidentiality throughout the process, sharing information only with those who have a legitimate need to know.

## 6. Appeals Process

- In accordance with Administrative Regulation & Procedure CC0200 (Process B), the investigation into a complaint may only be re-opened based upon "an extraordinary determination." A decision to re-open an investigation must be based on one of the following: (a) new evidence which was not available or unknown at the time of the investigation, or at the time the findings were made, that could substantially impact the original investigation or 2 findings; or (b) a procedural error or omission, or material deviation from established procedures that could substantially impact the original investigation or findings. The decision to re-open is at the sole discretion of the College's Title IX Coordinator
- Complaint or respondent has 10 business days to submit a request to re-open. Requests to reopen are emailed to [generalcounsel@matc.edu](mailto:generalcounsel@matc.edu)

## 7. Monitoring and Continuous Improvement

- In collaboration, the Office of Human Resources and the Office of General Counsel will monitor the effectiveness of the complaint resolution process with the following steps:
  - General Counsel will conduct a monthly review of Maxient reporting with tracking metrics such as the number of complaints received, resolution times, and outcomes
  - Collecting feedback from involved parties (e.g., complainants, accused parties, investigators) to identify areas for improvement in the process
  - Reviewing and updating any policies, procedures, and training materials as revealed in investigations
  - Reviewing all complaint-related policies and procedures to ensure compliance with laws and best practices annually
  - Providing ongoing training and awareness programs for employees, students, and investigators on the complaint resolution process, policies, and relevant laws and regulations.