Northwestern

OFFICE OF CIVIL RIGHTS & TITLE IX COMPLIANCE

QUICK GUIDE TO TITLE IX HEARINGS

An overview for complainants and respondents of what to expect if a Title IX matter proceeds to a hearing.

THE PROCESS AT A GLANCE

1) Notice of hearing and report issued
2) Respond to report
3) Pre-hearing conference
4) Hearing
5) Written determination
6) Appeal (if filed)

RESPOND TO THE REPORT

Each party may review and respond to the investigative report before the pre-hearing conference.

BEFORE THE HEARING

- ○ Review the report and your response
- ○ Confirm your advisor and witnesses with the Hearing Coordinator
- ○ Request accommodations or support early
- ○ Test Zoom and choose a private location

WHAT HAPPENS AND WHO IS INVOLVED

1. Pre-hearing conference

Held on Zoom

- Usually scheduled for one hour.
- You may attend; both parties may be present.
- Advisors may be present.
- Covers the process, witnesses, relevance, logistics, and accommodations.
- Does not include questions about the alleged conduct.

2. The hearing

A structured, live Zoom meeting

- Typically scheduled for a full day, 9 a.m.–5 p.m. (central time).
- Advisors ask questions; parties do not question each other directly.
- The Decision Maker rules on relevance before a question is answered.
- The hearing is recorded.
- Breaks and private breakout rooms are available.

3. People and participation

Your choices during the process

- You may have one advisor. The advisor conducts questioning.
- If you do not have an advisor, you may request one for the hearing at no cost by contacting OCR.
- A neutral Decision Maker leads the hearing; a Hearing Coordinator handles logistics.
- Participation is voluntary for parties and witnesses.
- The hearing continues with available evidence if a party does not attend.
- You choose which questions to answer.
- No adverse inference is drawn if you decline to attend or answer questions.

4. Determination and appeal

What happens after the hearing

- Both parties receive the written determination at the same time.
- Both parties will be provided with a Next Day Notice the day before the determination will be issued.
- The determination explains the outcome and rationale.
- The Decision Maker strives to provide a determination to the University within 30 days of the hearing.
- Either party may appeal on limited grounds within the stated timeframe.

PRIVACY, SUPPORT, AND QUESTIONS

Privacy

Information is shared only on a need-to-know basis.

No Retaliation

Retaliation for participating is prohibited.

Support

Supportive measures and resources remain available.

Accommodations

Contact the Hearing Coordinator or OCR as early as possible.

IMPORTANT: This guide is informational only and does not replace the University's Title IX policy.

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