

Overview of the sexual misconduct complaint resolution process

The Office of Equity receives a report of sexual misconduct.

A Title IX staff member from the Office of Equity contacts the person who may have experienced sexual misconduct to provide information about resources and options and an invitation to meet.

The person decides whether or not to meet with a Title IX staff member.

The person chooses to meet. The staff member goes over resources and options. The person may request interim measures and accommodations and may elect to proceed with an investigation.

The person chooses not to meet or requests not to proceed with an investigation. The University can typically honor that request.

The complainant chooses to proceed with an investigation. A Title IX staff member meets with the complainant to gather information about the concern. The complainant can suggest witnesses and provide evidence.

A Title IX staff member contacts the person who is alleged to have committed sexual misconduct (respondent) to notify them of the complaint, the resolution process, and the resources available to them.

The Title IX staff member investigating the complaint meets with the respondent to get information. The respondent can suggest witnesses and provide evidence.

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This flow chart is intended to provide a general overview. A full explanation of the sexual misconduct complaint resolution process can be found at www.northwestern.edu/sexual-misconduct/university-policy/process.html.

The Title IX staff member completes the investigation by collecting information from the complainant, respondent, and relevant witnesses and by reviewing all evidence collected.

If the respondent is a student and the matter has the potential to result in separation from the University, a panel hearing is scheduled by the Office of Student Conduct.

If the respondent is a student and the matter does not have the potential to result in separation from the University or if the respondent is a faculty member, staff member, or third party, the parties are provided a written summary of the information collected and a finding of whether there has been a policy violation.

A report including the information collected and findings of fact is provided to the complainant, respondent, and panel at least five days before the hearing.

When a policy violation is found and the respondent is a student, the Title IX Coordinator or Deputy Title IX Coordinator for Students will determine any sanctions or corrective actions.

The complainant and respondent meet with the panel separately. The panel decides whether there has been a policy violation; if so, what sanctions are appropriate; and informs the complainant and respondent of the outcome in writing.

When a policy violation is found and the respondent is a staff member, the findings will be forwarded to the Department of Human Resources and the respondent's unit. Any sanctions or corrective actions will be decided in accordance with the *Staff Handbook*.

When a policy violation is found and the respondent is a faculty member, the findings will be forwarded to the faculty member's dean and the associate provost for faculty. Any sanctions or corrective actions will be determined in accordance with the *Faculty Handbook*.

Any party may appeal a finding or sanction. Information on how to appeal is included in the outcome letters provided to the parties.