

Harrisburg School District

1601 State Street Harrisburg, PA 17103

<https://www.HBGSD.us/>



Procedures for Receiving & Processing Complaints

The following guidelines are to be followed should anyone come forward with a discrimination complaint within the Harrisburg School District Child Nutrition Programs:

Any person alleging discrimination within the School Meal Programs has a right to file a complaint. This complaint must occur within 180 days of the alleged discriminatory action. To file a complaint, contact the Director of HR at 717-703-4121. Once received, the Director of HR will follow the following procedures:

- 1) Sponsor receives a Civil Rights complaint from complainant
 - a. Sponsor informs complainant of Federal Civil Rights rules and regulations that have been established for protected classes. (A protected class is any person or group who are protected from discrimination based on race, color, national origin, age, sex, disability).
- 2) Sponsor provides complainant the necessary information to file a complaint, which is:
 - a. Mailing address of the USDA:
U.S. Department of Agriculture
Office of the Assistance Secretary for Civil Rights
1400 Independence Avenue, SW
Washington, D.C. 20250-0410
 - b. USDA's telephone/fax number and email address:
866-632-9992/ 202-690-7442 F/ Program.Intake@USDA.gov
 - c. Electronic link to file a civil rights complaint:
http://www.ascr.usda.gov/complaint_filing_cust.html

Note: If the sponsor is unsure if the complaint falls under a protected class, sponsor should provide complainant the federal complaint information.

- 3) After providing the complainant with the information on how to file a Civil Rights complaint directly at the federal level, the sponsor may attempt to resolve the complaint if it is a matter that can be resolved quickly. Resolving complaints in real-time at the lowest possible level is encouraged. (**Note:** This is not an investigation as neither the sponsor nor the State agency has the authority to conduct complaint investigations. This is simply trying to resolve the situation if it was potentially caused by a miscommunication.)

If the complainant refuses to discuss the matter any further with the sponsor or if the matter cannot be resolved quickly, then the sponsor should:

1. Reiterate the complaint filing procedures in 1)-2).
2. Document the complaint and actions taken (i.e., referral to Federal complaint procedures) in a Civil Right complaint log that is separate from any other complaint log. (**Note:** A separate Civil Rights complaint log is necessary due to confidentiality and privacy laws. See complaint log requirements in 4) below.)
3. Notify the State agency of the discussion. (Note: it is important for the sponsor to notify the State agency because regular communication

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between the sponsor and State agency is key to operating the program successfully.)

If the complainant is willing to try to resolve the issue with the sponsor and a satisfactory resolution is achieved, then the sponsor should still remind the complainant (using the information in 1)-2)) of his/her right to file at the Federal level if necessary. (**Note:** Complainants retain the right to file at the Federal level even if a resolution seems to have been reached at the sponsor level.) The sponsor needs to document the complaint and actions taken (i.e., how resolution was achieved) in a log that is separate from any other complaint log and notify the State agency of the resolution.

- 4) Regardless if the complainant wishes to file at the Federal level, the sponsor should document as much information as possible in their Civil Rights complaint log including, but not limited to, the following:
 - a. Date Complaint Received
 - b. Complainant's Name
 - c. Complainant's Address
 - d. Complainant's Telephone Number
 - e. Complainant's Email Address
 - f. Allegation of Discrimination/Issue (i.e., FNS program involved, protected class(es) involved, etc.)
 - g. Date of Alleged Discriminatory Action
 - i. The sponsor must forward the information, within 5 days of receipt of complaint from complainant to the State agency. Process: State Agency Civil Rights Coordinator > State Agency Director* > FNS Regional Office Civil Rights Contact > FNS Headquarters Civil Rights Office > Complainant
 - ii. State Agency level must forward complaint information, within 5 days of receipt of complaint from sponsor to the FNS regional office. FNS team conducts complaint review and investigation, which includes contact with the complainant, State agency, sponsor, etc.

USDA complaint form:

English version:

http://www.ocio.usda.gov/sites/default/files/docs/2012/Complain_combined_6_8_12.pdf

Spanish version:

http://www.ocio.usda.gov/sites/default/files/docs/2012/Spanish_Form_508_Complaint_6_8_12_0.pdf

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