

NOTICE OF OPPORTUNITY TO FILE COMPLAINTS: In accord with the U.S. Department of Education's Criteria and Procedures for Recognition of Accrediting Agencies, the Commission requires accredited programs to notify students of an opportunity to file complaints with the Commission.

Each program accredited by the Commission on Dental Accreditation must develop and implement a procedure to inform students of the mailing address and telephone number of the Commission on Dental Accreditation. The notice, to be distributed at regular intervals, but at least annually, must include but is not necessarily limited to the following language:

The Commission on Dental Accreditation will review complaints that relate to a program's compliance with the accreditation standards. The Commission is interested in the sustained quality and continued improvement of dental and dental-related education programs but does not intervene on behalf of individuals or act as a court of appeal for treatment received by patients or individuals in matters of admission, appointment, promotion or dismissal of faculty, staff or students.

A copy of the appropriate accreditation standards and/or the Commission's policy and procedure for submission of complaints may be obtained by contacting the Commission at 211 East Chicago Avenue, Chicago, IL 60611-2678 or by calling 1-800-621-8099 extension 4653.

The accredited program must retain in its files information to document compliance with this policy so that it is available for review during the Commission's on-site reviews of the program.

Anonymous Comments/Complaints

An "anonymous comment/complaint" is defined as an unsigned comment/complaint submitted to the Commission.

All anonymous complaints will be reviewed by Commission staff to determine linkage to Accreditation Standards or CODA policy and procedures. If linkage to Accreditation Standards or CODA policy is identified, legal counsel, the Chair or the appropriate Review Committee, and the applicable Review Committee members may be consulted to assist in determining whether there is sufficient evidence of probable cause of noncompliance with the standard(s) or required accreditation policy(ies), or procedure(s) to proceed with an investigation. The initial screening is usually completed within thirty (30) days. If further investigation is warranted, the anonymous complaint will be handled as a formal complaint (See Formal Complaints); however, due to the anonymous nature of the submission, the Commission will not correspond with the complainant.

Anonymous comments/complaints determined to be unrelated to an Accreditation Standard or CODA policies and procedures, or those that do not provide sufficient evidence of probable cause of noncompliance with the standard(s) or required accreditation policy(ies), or procedure(s) to proceed, will be added to the respective program's file for evaluation during the program's next scheduled accreditation site visit. At the time of the site visit, the program and site visit team will be informed of the anonymous comment/complaint. The program will have an opportunity to respond to the anonymous comment/complaint; the response will be considered during the site visit evaluation. Anonymous comments/complaints will be assessed to determine trends in compliance with Commission standards, policies, and procedures. The assessment of findings related to the anonymous comments/complaint will be documented in the site visit report.