



Lawrence Public Schools

Grievance Policy relating to Section 504

Section 504 requires agencies to provide individuals with disabilities an equal opportunity to participate in their programs and benefit from their services, including the provision of information to employees and members of the public. Agencies must provide appropriate auxiliary aids where necessary to ensure an equal opportunity. Types of auxiliary aids may include braille or large print versions of materials, electronic diskettes, audiotapes, qualified interpreters or readers, telecommunications devices for deaf persons (TDDs), captioning of video, and other methods of making information available and accessible to persons with disabilities. In considering what type of auxiliary aid to provide, agencies must give primary consideration to the request of the individual with a disability and shall honor that request, unless it can demonstrate that another effective means of communication exists.

Section 504 states that no individual with a disability shall, by reason of such disability, be excluded from participation in or be denied the benefits of the services, programs, or activities of a public entity, or be subjected to discrimination by any such entity. Any person who believes he or she has been improperly denied the benefit of, or access to a program, service, or activity may submit a grievance.

Lawrence Public Schools Grievance Procedures for Section 504

Individuals or groups who believe they have been subjected to unlawful discrimination on the basis of disability or have been denied access to services or accommodations required by law under Section 504, are encouraged to use these grievance procedures.

The grievance must be in the form of a detailed written complaint, and it must include the following below:

1. A full description of the violation of the regulations and any relevant facts, including dates.
2. The name and contact information (address, email address and phone number) of the person initiating the complaint.

Complaints related to Section 504 should be addressed to:

Arlene Reidinger
Assistant Superintendent
Lawrence Public Schools
237 Essex Street
Lawrence, MA 01840
Fax: (978) 722-8550
Arlene.Reidinger@lawrence.k12.ma.us

A grievant must notify Lawrence Public Schools of his or her informal Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 Grievance within ten (10) days of the occurrence.

A copy of the grievance may, where appropriate, be sent to the Lawrence Public Schools Facilities, Special Learning Services, and/or other departments involved for review and discussion to seek the best alternative and solution for the grievance.



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Confidentiality

Lawrence Public Schools will strive to maintain the confidentiality of information shared throughout the grievance process. However, disclosures may be required for the purpose of fact-finding or efforts to resolve the grievance. In the limited instances where disclosures must be made, disclosures will be limited to those persons necessary to proceed in the fact-finding process or to otherwise address the grievance. All persons involved in the grievance will be advised of the importance of confidentiality in the process and asked to maintain the confidentiality of the information discussed during the fact-finding process and the identity of the grievant.

A grievant should understand that where a grievance is specifically directed against one or more specific accessibility issues, the grievance itself or portions of the grievance will be disclosed to those department(s) and individual(s) for purposes of response.

A grievant should also understand that where a grievance is specifically directed against one or more specific individual(s), the grievance itself or portions of the grievance will be disclosed to those individual(s) for purposes of response.

Accessibility Remedies

The Lawrence Public Schools will impose remedies intended to correct the discriminatory effects on the grievant to prevent the recurrence of any prohibited acts.

Possible remedies under this grievance procedure include corrective steps, actions to reverse the effects of discrimination, and measures to provide a reasonable solution for the grievance.

Formal Federal Agency Grievance Procedures

Individuals or groups are encouraged to utilize Lawrence Public Schools process towards resolving disability-related grievances. However, individuals or groups with grievances or complaints against the Lawrence Public Schools based on the violations of Section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act or the Americans with Disabilities Act as Amended (ADAAA) also have the right to file a complaint with a designated federal agency.

Office of Civil Rights (OCR)
U.S. Department of Education
8th Floor
5 Post Office Square
Boston, MA 02109-3921
Telephone: (617) 289-0111
TDD: 800-877-8339
OCR.Boston@ed.gov

Records

The Lawrence Public Schools will retain the files and records related to Complaints and will ensure the confidentiality of such files and records in accordance with applicable legal requirements.