

SPRINGFIELD COLLEGE

SECTION 504 DISABILITY GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE

Springfield College ("College") has adopted this grievance procedure to assist in facilitating resolution of complaints alleging disability discrimination in violation of Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 ("Section 504"). The College has designated Erin Leeper, Director, Non-discrimination Initiatives/Title IX Administrator & 504 Coordinator, to coordinate its efforts to comply with Section 504. The College's 504 Coordinator ("the Coordinator") has the responsibility to: (1) prevent discrimination against students, employees, and others on the basis of disability; and (2) ensure compliance with all procedures and procedural safeguards required under Section 504/ADA. The contact information for the Coordinator is as follows: Erin Leeper, Director, Non-discrimination Initiatives/Title IX Administrator and 504 Coordinator, Richard B. Flynn Campus Union, 263 Alden Street, Springfield, MA 01109-3797, Telephone: 413-748-3248, Email: eleeper@springfieldcollege.edu.

The College strives to provide prompt and equitable resolution of complaints alleging action prohibited by pertinent federal, state, and local disability anti-discriminatory laws. This Procedure applies to discrimination on the basis of disability including: disagreement with the decisions made about accommodations; physical inaccessibility of a College program or activity; disability harassment; or any other form of discrimination on the basis of a disability or perception of a disability.

Students with inquiries regarding accessibility or disability documentation should contact Disability & Accessibility Services, as a part of the Academic Success Center. Students may contact the Associate Director of the Academic Success Center: Brianna Dickens
Telephone: (413) 748-3724
Email: ascdas@springfield.edu
Office: Academic Success Center, Learning Commons

Report an Accessibility Issue:

Students, faculty, staff, and community members may utilize the Accessibility Issue Form to alert the College to accessibility or accommodation concerns relative to any physical or programmatic barrier at the College. Concerns communicated to the College utilizing this form will be reviewed by the Coordinator. The Coordinator will confirm receipt and follow up for additional information gathering if necessary. By alerting the College of accessibility concerns, you are supporting the College as it strives to ensure physical and electronic access for persons with disabilities.

- The Accessibility Issue Form can be found here:
https://cm.maxient.com/reportingform.php?SpringfieldCollege&layout_id=50

Informal Resolution:

Individuals who believe they have experienced harassment, discriminatory treatment, or who have been denied access relative to a physical or development disability who wish to engage in an informal resolution process should contact the official listed below, by phone or email, who will attempt to resolve the individual's concern:

For students:

Erin Leeper, Director, Non-discrimination Initiatives/Title IX Administrator and 504 Coordinator; Flynn Campus Union Room 228, 263 Alden Street, Springfield, MA 01109-3797
Telephone: 413-748-3248
Email: eleeper@springfieldcollege.edu

For employees and third parties:

Melissa Gamba, Director of Human Resources, Administration Building, 263 Alden Street, Springfield, MA 01109-3797
Telephone: 413-748-5678
Email: mgamba@springfieldcollege.edu

At this stage, the complaining party shall be designated as the "aggrieved party," and the person(s) against whom the aggrieved party is complaining shall be designated as the "alleged discriminating party." The aggrieved party should provide a statement, in writing, describing the nature of the accessibility issue and the desired outcome or resolution.

The official will not serve as an advocate for either the aggrieved individual or the alleged discriminating party, but will work with each party and attempt to informally resolve the differences between them or address the concerns alleged. The official may require additional details from the aggrieved party as a part of the information gathering process.

Both the aggrieved party and the alleged discriminating party will be notified, in writing, of the proposed resolution, institutional plan, or outcome pertaining to the accessibility issue within fifteen (15) days.

If the official is not successful in achieving a satisfactory resolution in a prompt period of time, the official will inform the parties of the aggrieved party's right to file a formal grievance.

Formal Grievance Procedure:

If the individual is not satisfied with the resolution proposed by the appropriate responsible department/official listed above, the individual may choose to file a formal grievance. If the individual chooses to file a formal grievance, the following steps should be followed:

1. The individual shall file a formal grievance within forty-five (45) calendar days after he/she becomes aware of the alleged violation or denial of accommodation. Discretion may be exercised in the event contact is made after forty-five (45) days.

The individual shall file the grievance with the following:

For students and third-parties:

Erin Leeper, Director, Non-discrimination
Initiatives/Title IX Administrator and 504 Coordinator;
Flynn Campus Union Room 228, 263 Alden Street,
Springfield, MA 01109-3797
Telephone: 413-748-3248
Email: eleeper@springfieldcollege.edu

For employees:

Melissa Gamba, Director of Human Resources, Administration Building, 263
Alden Street, Springfield, MA 01109-3797
Telephone: 413-748-5678
Email: mgamba@springfieldcollege.edu

The grievance shall be in writing and include the following:

- The grievant's name, address, telephone number, and e-mail address;
 - A full description of the alleged discrimination, harassment, or access or accommodations problem;
 - A description of what efforts, if any, have been made to resolve the issue informally, identifying points of contact and means of communication; and
 - A statement of the remedy requested.
2. Within fourteen (14) calendar days of receipt, the Coordinator or the Director, as applicable, or his/her applicable designee (hereinafter referred to as the "Grievance Officer") shall read the complaint and conduct an investigation. In undertaking the investigation, the Grievance Officer may interview, consult with, and/or request a written response to the issues raised in the grievance from any individual the Grievance Officer believes to have relevant information, including faculty, staff, and students. If necessary or requested, the Grievance Officer will hear testimony or receive written testimony from the student, relevant faculty or staff member(s), and other knowledgeable people. The grievant has the right to ask for testimony from any individual whom he/she deems relevant to the case.
 3. After completing the investigation, the Grievance Officer shall report his/her conclusions and proposed disposition in writing to the grievant and all other relevant parties. This transmission will be expected within forty-five (45) calendar days of the filing of the formal grievance. The deadline may be extended for good cause (e.g. reasons related to breaks in the academic calendar). The final report may also be provided, where appropriate, to any

College officer whose authority will be needed to carry out the proposed disposition or to determine whether any personnel action is appropriate.

4. The disposition proposed by the Grievance Officer will be put into effect promptly.
5. Within ten (10) calendar days of the issuance of the final report, the grievant may appeal the Grievance Officer's determination by filing a written request for review to the following Appeal Officer, or his/her applicable designee:
 - Calvin Hill, Vice President for Inclusion and Community Engagement, Marsh Memorial Building, 263 Alden Street, Springfield, MA 01109-3797
Telephone: 413-748-3050
Email: chill@springfieldcollege.edu

The written request for review must specify the particular substantive and/or procedural basis for the appeal, and must be made on grounds other than general dissatisfaction with the proposed disposition. Furthermore, the appeal must be directed only to issues raised in the formal complaint as filed or to procedural errors in the conduct of the grievance procedure itself, and not to new issues.

If the grievance involves a decision that is being challenged, the review by the Appeal Officer usually will be limited to the following considerations:

- Were the proper facts and criteria brought to bear on the decision?
 - Were improper or extraneous facts or criteria brought to bear that substantially affected the decision to the detriment of the grievant?
 - Were there any procedural irregularities that substantially affected the outcome of the matter to the detriment of the grievant?
 - Given the proper facts, criteria, and procedures, was the decision a reasonable one?
6. A copy of the Appeal Officer's written decision will be expected within thirty (30) calendar days of the filing of the appeal and will be sent to the parties, the Grievance Officer and, if appropriate, to the College officer whose authority will be needed to carry out the disposition. The deadline may be extended by the Appeal Officer for good cause (e.g. reasons related to breaks in the academic calendar). The decision of the Appeal Officer on the appeal is final.