



**Student Accessibility Office
Grievance Procedure**

Applicability

The University of Saint Joseph is committed to providing equal opportunity and full participation for individuals with disabilities. The University recognizes its obligations to honor the letter and spirit of disability rights laws, including Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (29 U.S.C. 794) and title III of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (42 U.S.C. 12181–12189) as amended by the ADA Amendments Act of 2008 (Pub.L. 110-325).

The grievance procedure that follows applies to all students and other individuals using or accessing the University of Saint Joseph (USJ), other than employees of USJ. USJ employees with disability discrimination concerns may follow the procedures outlined in Employment Policy 2: Nondiscrimination, Equal Opportunity Employment & Diversity Program, Part III: Discrimination Complaint Procedures, of the Employee Handbook.

This procedure applies to individuals who feel their rights have been violated under Section 504 and/or title III of the ADA, as amended. The University of Saint Joseph supports an individual's right to file a grievance under this procedure if the individual believes they have been discriminated against on the basis of disability (including, but not limited to, alleged inaccessibility of a USJ program or activity, discriminatory impact of a USJ policy, harassment on the basis of disability by USJ employees, students, or third parties, disparate treatment, or denial of equal access in the form of appropriate accommodations, auxiliary aids, or effective communication). If there is a finding of discrimination or harassment on the basis of disability, USJ will take steps to prevent recurrence of any such harassment and to correct discriminatory effects on the complainant and others, if appropriate. Retaliation against individuals who file grievances under this procedure or who otherwise participate in the grievance process is prohibited.

This grievance procedure consists of two tiers: the Informal Procedure and the Formal Procedure. Although individuals may initiate the Formal Procedure at any time, it is hoped that the resolution of any complaint will begin with a sincere attempt at an informal resolution via the Informal Procedure.

Informal Procedure – Complaints and Resolutions

Individuals are encouraged to discuss their concerns with the Accessibility Coordinator as a first step. Individuals may contact the Accessibility Coordinator via email or phone to schedule an appointment (contact information below). Individuals will be given the opportunity to discuss the concern and present witnesses and other evidence, as applicable. Depending on the nature of the complaint, the Accessibility Coordinator may attempt to resolve the issue by contacting the involved parties in an effort to clarify and resolve issues and/or by assisting the individual in discussing the issue with the other involved parties. It is expected that most concerns will be positively resolved through this process of support and mediation. The individual and involved parties will be notified in writing by the Accessibility Coordinator of progress, findings, and a proposed resolution within 10 business days. Due to the urgency of many issues, it is likely that many problems will be resolved sooner.

Formal Procedure – Filing a Grievance

If the individual does not believe that a satisfactory resolution has been reached at the Informal Procedure stage, or if an individual prefers to skip the Informal Procedure stage, the individual may submit a complaint, in writing, to the ADA Coordinator and the Dean of Student Life (contact information below).

The complaint must include:

- A statement of the issue or alleged violation and a summary of steps the individual has taken, if any, to resolve the issue prior to submitting a grievance.
- A detailed description of relevant facts, including the individuals, locations, and dates involved. A chronology of events is appreciated.
- If applicable, a proposed remedy or resolution in response to the alleged violation.

After receipt of the complaint, the ADA Coordinator and the Dean of Student Life may take some or all of the following steps: meet in person with the individual submitting the complaint, consult with colleagues at USJ to discuss the events giving rise to the grievance, and/or request additional information from the individual submitting the complaint and/or from the accessibility coordinator. After investigating the situation, the Dean of Student Life will inform the individual and other involved parties, in writing, of progress, findings, and/or resolutions within 10 business days.

Should the individual not agree with the resolution reached via the Formal Procedure, the individual should submit a complaint to the Office for Civil Rights, which has jurisdiction to investigate violations of Section 504 (contact information below). Please note by law, complaints of discrimination must ordinarily be filed with the Office for Civil Rights within 180 days of the last act of discrimination.

Contact Information for the USJ's Accessibility Coordinator:

Abby-Lyn Dorman, M.Ed.
Division of Student Affairs, McGovern Hall 201
Email: adorman@usj.edu
Phone: (860) 231-5730

Contact Information for USJ's Dean of Student Life:

Brandon Dawson, Ed.S.
Division of Student Affairs, McGovern Hall 105
Email: brandon@usj.edu
Phone: (860) 231-5430

Contact Information for the Office of Civil Rights:

Office for Civil Rights, US Department of Education
8th Floor, 5 Post Office Square. Boston, MA 02109-3921
Website: <https://ocrcas.ed.gov/>
Email: OCR.Boston@ed.gov
Phone: 617-289-0111; TDD: 800-877-8339