

School of Public Health

Dispute Resolution Procedures for Postdoctoral Fellows

This policy is intended to provide an opportunity for the resolution of disputes involving postdoctoral fellows in a fair and equitable manner. The procedures listed below establish a formal mechanism for postdoctoral fellows to request review and resolution of disputes arising out of their academic relationships with mentors, departments, or the school (e.g., issues regarding fair and equal treatment, access to resources, attribution in publications or other issues concerning the perceived equity and fairness of treatment in their employment). The formal procedures described in this policy are intended to be used only when matters cannot be resolved informally.

All records and information related to dispute resolution proceedings shall be kept confidential to the degree permitted by law. Parties to the grievance, their counsel, and other relevant administrators and faculty (including witnesses, presiding officers, and panel members) shall respect the confidentiality of information and records and the privacy of all parties whose interests are affected by a grievance. The School of Public Health Official for dispute resolutions is Sharon Kardia, PhD., Senior Associate Dean for Administration, and may be reached at skardia@umich.edu or 734-764-4221.

The following procedures are for postdoctoral fellows who wish to complain of any action or inaction, which the fellow alleges to be in violation of University policy or to be unfair, arbitrary, or capricious.

- A. The fellow should seek to resolve the matter by informal means through his/her mentor/supervisor. Fellows are encouraged to discuss concerns and/or complaints with their mentors to attempt resolution at an early stage.
- B. If the matter is not resolved satisfactorily, the fellow shall then seek resolution by informal means through the Chair of their department.
- C. If the matter is still not satisfactorily resolved, the fellow may request resolution by the Senior Associate Dean for Administration of the School of Public Health. The fellow shall file a written statement stating the alleged wrong, the facts that the fellow believes support the allegations, and the disposition of the matter at prior informal steps.
- D. The Senior Associate Dean for Administration shall seek to resolve the matter promptly.
 1. They may seek advice from the Dean, Associate Dean for Research, Executive committee or establish an ad hoc committee for advice on the matter.
 2. Before the Senior Associate Dean for Administration decides a case, he or she should consult with the Office of Academic Human Resources or the Office of the General Counsel to assure correct and consistent interpretation of University policy and/or the law.

When the Senior Associate Dean for Administration decides the matter, they or their designee will convey to the fellow in writing the decision and the reasons for it.

- E. If the postdoctoral fellow does not believe the matter has been resolved satisfactorily, he or she may request a resolution by the Dean of Rackham Graduate School. The fellow shall file a written statement with the Dean at Rackham stating the alleged wrong, the facts that the fellow believes support the allegations, and the disposition of the matter at prior steps.

When the Dean of Rackham decides the matter, the Dean or his or her designee will convey to the fellow and the Senior Associate Dean for Administration of the School of Public Health in writing the decision and the reasons for it.

A postdoctoral fellow may request the Rackham Resolution Officer to assist with informally resolving complaints prior to instituting a complaint through formal channels. The Rackham Resolution Officer provides confidential and informal assistance in resolving these conflicts and promotes fair and equitable treatment within the University. They are also available to coach the postdoctoral fellow on how to manage conflict and discuss options for mediation. The postdoctoral fellow may discuss issues and concerns with the Rackham Resolution Officer without committing to further disclosure or any formal resolution. Information concerning any visit will not be disclosed without the fellow's permission, absent compelling reasons (e.g., a court order or a potential threat to safety). You can contact the Rackham Resolution Officer by email at rayj@umich.edu or by phone (734) 936-1647. Please remember email is not recommended for confidential discussions.