

ACCME's Process for Handling Complaints/Inquiries Regarding ACCME Recognized Intrastate Accreditors

1. Complaints/inquires are written notifications to the ACCME by a third party which claim that an ACCME recognized Intrastate Accreditor is not in compliance with ACCME Recognition Essential Areas, their Elements, or Recognition policies.
2. To receive status as a complaint/inquiry the written complaint must confirm the name, USPS address and contact information of the person making the submission.
3. The statute of limitation of the length of time during which an accreditor must be accountable for any complaints/inquiries received by the ACCME is their current term of Recognition.
4. The confidentiality of the complaining/inquiring party shall be protected, except as may be required by legal process.
5. ACCME may initiate a complaint or inquiry about an accreditor.

Procedure for review, analysis, compliance determination and reporting regarding complaints and inquiries

6. ACCME will review the complaint/inquiry to determine whether it relates to the manner in which the accreditor complies with Recognition Essential Areas, their Elements, or Recognition policies.
7. The person initiating the complaint will be notified of the planned course of action by the ACCME.
8. ACCME may or may not need to ask the accreditor for additional informationⁱ. If, during the course of addressing the complaint inquiry, additional information is needed from the accreditor then the accreditor's response must be accompanied, where possible, by supporting documentation.
9. All responses from the accreditor to a Letter of Inquiry must be received by the ACCME within thirty days after the accreditor receives the request for information/response from the ACCME. If an accreditor fails to respond to any request for information, the ACCME may change the accreditor's recognition status to **Probation** or **Non Recognition**^{vi}.

When ACCME determines that the information submitted is adequate upon which to base a finding

10. The accreditor may be found in Compliance or Not in Complianceⁱⁱ.
11. The accreditor will be notified of the finding. If the finding is Not in Compliance, the non-compliance will be explained in a **Notice of Non-Compliance** to the accreditorⁱⁱⁱ.

Next steps

12. The ACCME may require the accreditor to submit **documentation of corrective action**^{iv} within thirty days of receipt of the Notice of Non-Compliance.
13. The ACCME may require the accreditor to submit a **Monitoring Progress Report**^v at a time determined by the ACCME.

Outcomes

14. If an accreditor fails to respond to a request for information, the ACCME will change the accreditor's recognition status to **Probation** or **Non Recognition**^{vi}.
15. If an accreditor fails to convert a finding of **Non-Compliance** to **Compliance**, the ACCME reserves the right to change the accreditor's recognition status to **Probation** or **Non Recognition**^{vi}.
16. At any point in the complaint/inquiry process the ACCME reserves the right to require an immediate full or focused Recognition survey, including a full or focused self-study report and interview^{vii}.

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- ⁱ If, during the course of addressing the complaint inquiry, additional information is needed from the accreditor then ACCME will send a written communication (Letter of Inquiry) that confirms receipt (e.g., email, USPS certified mail, FEDEX-type courier) to the accreditor describing the nature of the complaint/inquiry. The Letter of Inquiry will request a response in which the accreditor can offer its interpretation of how it complies with ACCME Recognition Essential Areas, their Elements, or Recognition policies. Upon receipt of the accreditor's response, the ACCME shall determine whether additional information is necessary and may request such information from the accreditor.
- ⁱⁱ If a finding of 'Not in Compliance' results from a complaint of inquiry then the ACCME Letter of Inquiry, the accreditor's response, any documentation of corrective action and any Monitoring Progress Report will be placed in the accreditor's file and will be made available to the survey team and the CRR reviewer at the next review. The material will be included in the files reviewed by ACCME for re-recognition.
- ⁱⁱⁱ ACCME will send a Notice of Non-Compliance (that confirms receipt e.g., email, USPS certified mail, FEDEX-type courier) to the Accreditor describing the nature of the non compliance.
- ^{iv} When asked for 'documentation of corrective action' the accreditor will be asked to provide documentation of corrective action to the ACCME within thirty days of receipt of the Notice of Non-Compliance, and will be notified that failure to correct the deficiencies may result in an immediate resurvey which may affect the accreditor's recognition status.
- ^v If the Monitoring Report adequately describes and documents Compliance it will be accepted. If the Monitoring Report does not adequately describe and/or document Compliance it will NOT be accepted.
- ^{vi} **Regarding Letters of Inquiry:** Change of status to **Probation** will automatically occur at 45 days from the time the accreditor receives a request for information/response from the ACCME, if the accreditor has failed to respond to a request for information. **Regarding Documentation of Corrective Action:** Change of status to **Probation** will automatically occur at 15 days after the due date for the notice set by the ACCME, if the accreditor has failed to submit the required documentation of corrective action. **Regarding Monitoring Progress Report:** Change of status to **Probation** will automatically occur at 15 days after the due date for the Monitoring Progress Report set by the ACCME, if the accreditor has failed to submit the required Monitoring Progress Report. Change of status to **Non Recognition** will occur at 15 days from the date an accreditor was placed on Probation for failure to submit information, documentation of corrective action or a monitoring Progress Report if the accreditor has still failed to submit the required information. Change of status to **Probation or Non Recognition** for 'failure to submit' does not require Board action.
- ACCME will send a notice to the accreditor of this change of status in a manner that confirms receipt (e.g., email, USPS certified mail, FEDEX-type courier). In the communication the accreditor will be informed that a change of status to Non Recognition will occur if the accreditor has failed to respond to the request for information in the manner stipulated by ACCME.
- ^{vii} An accreditor's compliance must be reviewed by the CRR/DC in order to either a) change the accreditor's recognition status to Probation or Non Recognition or b) proceed with a full or focused recognition survey, including a full or focused self-study report and interview.