

**MOHAWK VALLEY COMMUNITY COLLEGE  
NONDISCRIMINATION POLICY/NOTICE OF NONDISCRIMINATION – 2024 FINAL  
RULE**

**Effective August 1, 2024**

**Nondiscrimination Policy<sup>1</sup>**

**Under 2024 Amendments to the U.S. Department of Education’s  
Title IX Regulations**

Mohawk Valley Community College does not discriminate on the basis of sex and prohibits sex discrimination in any Education Program or Activity that it operates, as required by Title IX, including in admission and employment.

**Notice of Nondiscrimination<sup>2</sup>**

**Under 2024 Amendments to the U.S. Department of Education’s  
Title IX Regulations**

Mohawk Valley Community College does not discriminate on the basis of sex and prohibits sex discrimination in any Education Program or Activity that it operates, as required by Title IX and its regulations, including in admission and employment.

Inquiries about Title IX may be referred to Mohawk Valley Community College’s Title IX Coordinator, the U.S. Department of Education’s Office for Civil Rights, or both. Mohawk Valley Community College’s Title IX Coordinator is Jennifer DeWeerth, insert office address, [jdeweerth@mvcc.edu](mailto:jdeweerth@mvcc.edu), (315) 334-7701.

Mohawk Valley Community College’s nondiscrimination policy and grievance procedures is located at <https://mvcc.edu/titleix>.

To report information about conduct that may constitute sex discrimination or make a Complaint of sex discrimination under Title IX, please refer to <https://mvcc.edu/titleix>.

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<sup>1</sup> 34 C.F.R. 106.8(b).

<sup>2</sup> 34 C.F.R. 106.8(c).

# **GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE FOR COMPLAINTS OF SEX DISCRIMINATION OTHER THAN SEX-BASED HARASSMENT**

## **Grievance Procedure for Complaints of Sex Discrimination** **(Under § 106.45 of the 2024 Title IX Final Rule)**<sup>3</sup>

### **I. Effective Date**

This Procedure applies to incidents that occur on or after August 1, 2024. Any incidents reported under this Procedure that occurred on or before July 31, 2024, will be processed through Mohawk Valley Community College’s Title IX Grievance (Sexual Violence) policy.

Should any portion of the 2024 Title IX Final Rule (89 Fed. Reg. 33474 (Apr. 29, 2024)), be stayed or held invalid by a court of law, or if the 2024 Title IX Final Rule is withdrawn or modified to not require elements of this Grievance Procedure, the Grievance Procedure in its entirety, or the invalidated elements of this Procedure, will be deemed revoked as of the effective date of the order from the Court and for all reports after that date, as well as any elements of the process that occur after that date if a case is not complete by the effective date of order of the Court. If this Procedure is revoked in this manner, any conduct covered under this Procedure shall be investigated and adjudicated under the previous 2020 Title IX Grievance (Sexual Violence). Mohawk Valley Community College will update this Grievance Procedure as soon as practicable to reflect any court rulings or changes that invalidate parts of the Grievance Procedure, if applicable.

### **II. Scope of Procedure**<sup>4</sup>

Mohawk Valley Community College has adopted a grievance procedure that provides for the prompt and equitable resolution of sex discrimination Complaints made by students, employees, or other individuals who are participating or attempting to participate in its Education Program or Activity, or by the Title IX Coordinator, alleging any action that would be prohibited by Title IX or the Title IX regulations.

Sex discrimination, as defined by Title IX, includes discrimination on the basis of sex stereotypes, sex characteristics, pregnancy or related conditions, sexual orientation, and gender identity.

Title IX’s prohibition on sex discrimination includes sex-based harassment in the form of quid pro quo harassment, hostile environment harassment, and four specific offenses (sexual assault, dating violence, domestic violence, and stalking). For the prompt and equitable resolution of Complaints of sex-based harassment involving a student Party, Mohawk Valley Community College will utilize [insert link to institution’s Sex-Based Harassment Grievance Procedure].

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<sup>3</sup> 34 C.F.R. 106.45.

<sup>4</sup> 34 C.F.R. 106.10.

### III. Jurisdiction of Procedure<sup>5</sup>

- This Procedure applies to all sex discrimination occurring under Mohawk Valley Community College's Education Program or Activity in the United States.
- Conduct that occurs under Mohawk Valley Community College's Education Program or Activity includes but is not limited to conduct that occurs in a building owned or controlled by a student organization that is officially recognized by Mohawk Valley Community College and conduct that is subject to Mohawk Valley Community College's disciplinary authority.
- Mohawk Valley Community College has an obligation to address a sex-based hostile environment under its Education Program or Activity, even when some conduct alleged to be contributing to the hostile environment occurred outside Mohawk Valley Community College's Education Program or Activity or outside the United States.
  - In the limited circumstances in which Title IX permits different treatment or separation on the basis of sex, Mohawk Valley Community College must not carry out such different treatment or separation in a manner that discriminates on the basis of sex by subjecting a person to more than de minimis harm, except as permitted by law.

### IV. Definitions<sup>6</sup>

1. **Admission** means selection for part-time, full-time, special, associate, transfer, exchange, or any other enrollment, membership, or matriculation in or at an Education Program or Activity operated by Mohawk Valley Community College.
2. **Consent** means a knowing, voluntary, and mutual decision among all participants to engage in sexual activity. Consent can be given by words or actions, as long as those words or actions create clear permission regarding willingness to engage in the sexual activity. Silence or lack of resistance, in and of itself, does not demonstrate consent. The definition of consent does not vary based upon a participant's sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, or gender expression.
3. **Complainant** means:
  - (a) a student or employee who is alleged to have been subjected to conduct that could constitute sex discrimination under Title IX or this policy; or
  - (b) a person other than a student or employee who is alleged to have been subjected to conduct that could constitute sex discrimination under Title IX or this policy and who was participating or attempting to participate in Mohawk Valley Community College's Education Program or Activity at the time of the alleged sex discrimination.
4. **Complaint** means an oral or written request to Mohawk Valley Community College that objectively can be understood as a request for Mohawk Valley

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<sup>5</sup> 34 C.F.R. 106.11.

<sup>6</sup> 34 C.F.R. 106.2.

Community College to investigate and make a determination about alleged sex discrimination under Title IX or this policy.

5. **Confidential Employee** means:

(1) an employee of Mohawk Valley Community College whose communications are privileged under Federal or State law. The employee's confidential status is only with respect to information received while the employee is functioning within the scope of their duties to which privilege or confidentiality applies;

(2) an employee of Mohawk Valley Community College whom Mohawk Valley Community College has designated as confidential for the purpose of providing services to persons related to sex discrimination. If the employee also has a duty not associated with providing those services, the employee's confidential status is only with respect to information received about sex discrimination in connection with providing those services; or

(3) an employee of Mohawk Valley Community College who is conducting an Institutional Review Board-approved human-subjects research study designed to gather information about sex discrimination. The employee's confidential status is only with respect to information received while conducting the study.

6. **Disciplinary Sanctions** means consequences imposed on a Respondent following a determination under this grievance procedure that the Respondent Mohawk Valley Community College's prohibition on sex discrimination.

7. **Education Program or Activity** means all of the operations of Mohawk Valley Community College.

8. **Party** means Complainant or Respondent.

9. **Peer Retaliation** means retaliation by a student against another student.

10. **Pregnancy or related conditions** means

(a) Pregnancy, childbirth, termination of pregnancy, or lactation;

(b) Medical conditions related to pregnancy, childbirth, termination of pregnancy, or lactation; or

(c) Recovery from pregnancy, childbirth, termination of pregnancy, lactation, or related medical conditions.

11. **Relevant** means related to the allegations of sex discrimination under investigation as part of this Grievance Procedure. Questions are relevant when they seek evidence that may aid in showing whether the alleged sex discrimination occurred, and evidence is relevant when it may aid a decisionmaker in determining whether the alleged sex discrimination occurred.

11. **Remedies** means measures provided, as appropriate, to a Complainant or any other person Mohawk Valley Community College identified as having had their equal access to Mohawk Valley Community College's Education Program or Activity limited or denied by sex discrimination. These measures are provided to restore or preserve that person's access to Mohawk Valley Community College's Education Program or Activity after Mohawk Valley Community College determines that sex discrimination occurred.

12. **Respondent** means a person who is alleged to have Mohawk Valley Community College's prohibition on sex discrimination.

13. **Retaliation** means intimidation, threats, coercion, or discrimination by any person by Mohawk Valley Community College, a student, or an employee or other person authorized by Mohawk Valley Community College to provide aid, benefit, or service under Mohawk Valley Community College's Education Program or Activity, for the purpose of interfering with any right or privileged secured by Title IX, or because the person has reported information, made a Complaint, testified, assisted or participated or refused to participate in any manner in an investigation, proceeding, or hearing under this Grievance Procedure including an informal resolution process.

14. **Sex-Based Harassment** means sexual harassment and other harassment on the basis of sex, including harassment because of gender identity, sexual orientation, sex characteristics, sex stereotypes, and/or pregnancy and other conditions, that is:

(1) Quid pro quo harassment. An employee, agent or other person authorized by Mohawk Valley Community College's Education Program or Activity explicitly or impliedly conditioning the provision of such an aid, benefit, or service on a person's participation in unwelcome sexual conduct;

(2) Hostile environment harassment. Unwelcome sex-based conduct that, based on the totality of the circumstances, is subjectively and objectively offensive and is so severe or pervasive that it limits or denies a person's ability to participate in or benefit from Mohawk Valley Community College's Education Program or Activity (i.e., creates a hostile environment). Whether a hostile environment has been created is a fact-specific inquiry that includes consideration of the following:

1. The degree to which the conduct affected the Complainant's ability to access Mohawk Valley Community College's Education Program or Activity;
2. The type, frequency, and duration of the conduct;
3. The Parties' ages, roles within Mohawk Valley Community College's Education Program or Activity, previous interactions and other factors about each Party that may be relevant to evaluating the effects of the conduct;

4. The location of the conduct and the context in which the conduct occurred; and
5. Other sex-based harassment in Mohawk Valley Community College's Education Program or Activity.

(3) Sexual Assault (as defined in the Clery Act) means any sexual act directed against another person, without the consent of the victim, including instances where the victim is incapable of giving consent;

(4) Dating Violence (as defined in the Violence Against Women Act (VAWA) Reauthorization of 2022 and the VAWA Amendments to the Clery Act) means any violence committed by a person:

(A) who is or has been in a social relationship of a romantic or intimate nature with the victim; and

(B) Where the existence of such a relationship shall be determined based on a consideration of the following factors: The length of the relationship; the type of relationship; and the frequency of interaction between the persons involved in the relationship.

(5) Domestic Violence means any felony or misdemeanor crimes committed by a person who:

(A) Is a current or former partner of the victim under the family or domestic violence laws of New York State or a person similarly situated to a spouse of the victim;

(B) Is cohabitating, or has cohabitated, with the victim as a spouse or intimate partner;

(C) Shared a child in common with the victim; or

(D) Commits acts against a youth or adult victim who is protected from those acts under the family or domestic violence laws of New York State; or

(6) Stalking means engaging in a course of conduct directed at a specific person that would cause a reasonable person to:

(A) fear for the person's safety or the safety of others; or

(B) suffer substantial emotional distress.

15. **Student** means a person who has gained admission.

16. **Supportive Measures** means individualized measures offered as appropriate, as reasonably available, without unreasonably burdening a Complainant or Respondent, not for punitive or disciplinary reasons, and without fee or charge to the Complainant or Respondent to:

- 1) Restore or preserve that Party's access to Mohawk Valley Community College's Education Program or Activity, including measures that are designed to protect the safety of the Parties or Mohawk Valley Community College's educational environment; or
- 2) Provide support during Mohawk Valley Community College's Grievance Procedure for sex discrimination or during the informal resolution process.

## **V. Basic Requirements of Title IX Grievance Procedure:<sup>7</sup>**

- a) **Equitable Treatment:** Mohawk Valley Community College will treat Complainants and Respondents equitably.
- b) **Conflicts and Bias:** Mohawk Valley Community College requires that any Title IX Coordinator, investigator, or decisionmaker not have a conflict of interest or bias for or against Complainants or Respondents generally or an individual Complainant or Respondent. A decisionmaker may be the same person as the Title IX Coordinator or investigator.
- c) **Presumption:** Mohawk Valley Community College presumes that the Respondent is not responsible for the alleged sex discrimination until a determination is made at the conclusion of its Grievance Procedure.

**Reasonably Prompt Timeframes:** Mohawk Valley Community College has established timeframes for the major stages of the grievance procedures and works diligently to conclude all investigations, hearings, determinations, outcomes and appeals within 60 days.

- d) **Extensions:** Mohawk Valley Community College has also established the following process that allows for the reasonable extension of timeframes on a case-by-case basis for good cause with notice to the Parties that includes the reason for the delay:].
  - i. Each party may request a one-time delay in the Grievance Process of up to five (5) business days for good cause (granted or denied in the sole judgment of the decision-maker provided that the requestor provides reasonable notice, and the delay does not overly inconvenience other parties.
  - ii. A delay of up to 10 business days may be requested if a concurrent law enforcement investigation is occurring.
- e) **Privacy:** Mohawk Valley Community College will take reasonable steps to protect the privacy of the Parties and witnesses during its grievance procedure. These steps will not restrict the ability of the Parties to obtain and present evidence, including by speaking to witnesses; consult with their family members, confidential resources, or advisors; or otherwise prepare for or participate in the grievance procedure. The Parties cannot engage in retaliation, including against witnesses.

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<sup>7</sup> 34 C.F.R. 106.45(b).

- f) **Objectivity:** Mohawk Valley Community College will objectively evaluate all evidence that is relevant and not otherwise impermissible including both inculpatory and exculpatory evidence. Credibility determinations will not be based on a person's status as a Complainant, Respondent, or witness.
  
- g) **Impermissible Evidence:** The following types of evidence, and questions seeking that evidence, are impermissible (i.e., will not be accessed or considered), except by Mohawk Valley Community College to determine whether one of the exceptions listed below applies; will not be disclosed; and will not otherwise be used), regardless of whether they are relevant:
  - i) Evidence that is protected under a privilege recognized by Federal or State law or evidence provided to a confidential employee, unless the person to whom the privilege or confidentiality is owed has voluntarily waived the privilege or confidentiality;
  - ii) A Party's or witness's records that are made or maintained by a physician, psychologist, or other recognized professional or paraprofessional in connection with the provision of treatment to the Party or witness, unless Mohawk Valley Community College obtains that Party's or witness's voluntary, written consent for use in its grievance procedures; and
  - iii) Evidence that relates to the Complainant's sexual interests or prior sexual conduct, unless evidence about the Complainant's prior sexual conduct is offered to prove that someone other than the Respondent committed the alleged conduct or is evidence about specific incidents of the Complainant's prior sexual conduct with the Respondent that is offered to prove consent to the alleged sex-based harassment. The fact of prior consensual sexual conduct between the Complainant and Respondent does not by itself demonstrate or imply the Complainant's consent to the alleged sex-based harassment or preclude determination that sex-based harassment occurred.

## **VI. Disability Accommodations**

### **A. Generally**

This Procedure does not alter any institutional obligations under federal and state disability laws, including the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. Parties may request reasonable accommodations for disclosed disabilities to the Title IX Coordinator at any point before or during the Title IX Grievance Procedure that do not fundamentally alter the Procedure. The Title IX Coordinator will not affirmatively provide disability accommodations that have not been specifically requested by the Parties, even where the Parties may be receiving accommodations in other institutional programs and activities.

### **B. Supportive Measures**

If the Complainant or Respondent discloses a disability, the Title IX Coordinator may consult, as appropriate, with the Office of Accessibility Resources to provide support to students with disabilities to determine how to comply with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 in the implementation of any supportive measures.

## **VII. Confidential Reports**

The following officials at Mohawk Valley Community College will provide privacy, but not confidentiality, upon receiving a report of conduct prohibited by Title IX:

- Title IX Coordinator or designee(s);
- Deputy Title IX Coordinator, in the absence of the Coordinator;
- Department of Public Safety

The following officials at Mohawk Valley Community College may provide confidentiality:

- Licensed Mental Health Practitioners within the College’s Counseling Department

### **A. Public Awareness Events**

When Mohawk Valley Community College’s Title IX Coordinator is notified of information about conduct that reasonably may constitute sex-based harassment under Title IX or this policy that was provided by a person during a public event to raise awareness about sex-based harassment that was held on Mohawk Valley Community College’s campus or through an online platform sponsored by it, Mohawk Valley Community College is not obligated to act in response to the information, unless it indicates an imminent and serious threat to the health or safety of a Complainant, any students, employees, or other persons.

However, in all cases Mohawk Valley Community College must use this information to inform its efforts to prevent sex-based harassment, including by providing tailored training to address alleged sex-based harassment in a particular part of its Education Program or Activity or at a specific location when information indicates there may be multiple incidents of sex-based harassment.

Nothing in Title IX or this policy obligates Mohawk Valley Community College to require its Title IX Coordinator or any other employee to attend such public awareness events.

## **VIII. Supportive and Interim Measures**

### **A. Providing Supportive Measures<sup>8</sup>**

Complainants who report allegations of sex discrimination have the right to receive supportive measures from Mohawk Valley Community College regardless of whether they file a Complaint. Supportive measures are non-disciplinary and non-punitive. Supportive measures may vary depending upon what is reasonably available at Mohawk Valley Community College.

As appropriate, supportive measures may include but not be limited to:

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<sup>8</sup> 34 C.F.R. 106.44(g).

- Counseling services;
- Extensions of deadlines or other course-related adjustments;
- Modifications of work or class schedules;
- Campus escort services, as available;
- Restrictions on contact applied to one or more Parties (no contact orders)
- changes in class, work, housing, or extracurricular or any other activity, regardless of whether there is or is not a comparable alternative;
- Leaves of absence;
- Increased security and monitoring of certain areas of the campus; or
- Training and education programs related to sex discrimination harassment.

Supportive measures must not unreasonably burden either Party and must be designed to protect the safety of the Parties or Mohawk Valley Community College’s educational environment, or to provide support during Mohawk Valley Community College’s sex discrimination grievance procedure under this policy or during informal resolution under these procedures.

Mohawk Valley Community College may modify or terminate supportive measures at the conclusion of the grievance procedure or at the conclusion of the informal resolution process or may continue them beyond that point within Mohawk Valley Community College’s discretion.

Mohawk Valley Community College will not disclose information about any supportive measures to persons other than the person to whom they apply, including informing one Party of supportive measures provided to another Party, unless necessary to provide the supportive measure or restore or preserve a Party’s access to Mohawk Valley Community College’s Education Program or Activity, or there is an exception that applies, such as:

- Mohawk Valley Community College has obtained prior written consent from a person with the legal right to consent to the disclosure;
- When the information is disclosed to an appropriate third Party with the legal right to receive disclosures on behalf of the person whose personally identifiable information is at issue;
- To carry out the purpose of the policy when it is necessary to address conduct that reasonably may constitute sex discrimination under Title IX in Mohawk Valley Community College’s Education Program or Activity;
- As required by Federal law, federal regulations, or the terms and conditions of a federal award; or
- To the extent such disclosures are not otherwise in conflict with Title IX, when required by State or local law or when permitted under the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) (20 U.S.C. 1232g, or its implementing regulations, 34 CFR Part 99).

## **B. Process for Review of Supportive Measures<sup>9</sup>**

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<sup>9</sup> 34 C.F.R. 106.44(g)(4).

Mohawk Valley Community College provides for a Complainant or Respondent to seek modification or reversal of Mohawk Valley Community College's decision to provide, deny, modify or terminate a supportive measure.

This review will be done by an impartial employee of Mohawk Valley Community College, who did not make the challenged decision on the original supportive measure request. The impartial employee of Mohawk Valley Community College who makes this determination will have the authority to modify or reverse the decision if that impartial employee determines that the decision to provide, deny, modify or terminate the supportive measure was inconsistent with the procedure as outlined above for providing supportive measures in accordance with the Title IX regulations.

Parties are only allowed to challenge their own individual supportive measures. Challenges by one Party will not be heard to supportive measures afforded to the opposite Party, unless that supportive measure directly impacts the Party making such challenge (i.e., two-way no contact orders).

### **C. Emergency Removal<sup>10</sup>**

Mohawk Valley Community College retains the authority to remove a Respondent from Mohawk Valley Community College's Education Program or Activity on an emergency basis, where Mohawk Valley Community College (1) undertakes an individualized safety and risk analysis, and (2) determines that an imminent and serious threat to the health or safety of a Complainant or any students, employees, or other persons arising from the allegations of sex discrimination harassment justifies removal.

Mohawk Valley Community College will provide the Respondent with notice and an opportunity to challenge the decision immediately following the removal. If Mohawk Valley Community College determines such removal is necessary, the respondent will be provided notice and an opportunity to challenge the decision immediately following the removal. The student would send their challenge to the Title IX Coordinator via email, who will provide the information to the Vice President for Learning & Academic Affairs or designee for review and decision.

### **Administrative Leave<sup>11</sup>**

Mohawk Valley Community College retains the authority to place a non-student employee Respondent on administrative leave during the Title IX Grievance Procedure, consistent with relevant employee handbook/collective bargaining agreements etc.

Note on student employees: when a Complainant or Respondent is both a student and an employee of Mohawk Valley Community College, Mohawk Valley Community College must make a fact-specific inquiry to determine whether these procedures apply to that student

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<sup>10</sup> 34 C.F.R. 106.44(h).

<sup>11</sup> 34 C.F.R. 106.44(i).

employee. If the Complainant or Respondent’s primary relationship with Mohawk Valley Community College is to receive an education and whether the alleged sex discrimination occurred while the Party was performing employment-related work.

## **IX. The Title IX Grievance Procedure for Sex Discrimination Other than Sex-Based Harassment**

### **A. Filing a Complaint<sup>12</sup>**

Who can make a Complaint?

- A Complainant, which includes: a student or employee of Mohawk Valley Community College who is alleged to have been subjected to conduct that could constitute sex discrimination under Title IX; or a person other than a student or employee of Mohawk Valley Community College who is alleged to have been subjected to conduct that could constitute sex discrimination under Title IX at a time when that individual was participating or attempting to participate in Mohawk Valley Community College’s Education Program or Activity;
- A parent, guardian, or other authorized legal representative with the legal right to act on behalf of a Complainant;
- Any student or employee;
- Any person other than a student or employee who was participating or attempting to participate in Mohawk Valley Community College’s Education Program or Activity at the time of the alleged sex discrimination; or
- The Title IX Coordinator, in the absence of a Complaint or the withdrawal of any or all of the allegations in a Complaint, and in the absence or termination of an informal resolution process, upon consideration of the following factors:
  - The Complainant’s request not to proceed with the initiation of a Complaint;
  - The Complainant’s reasonable safety concerns regarding initiation of a Complaint;
  - The risk that additional acts of sex discrimination would occur if a Complaint were not initiated;
  - The severity of the alleged sex discrimination, including whether the discrimination, if established, would require the removal of a Respondent from campus or imposition of another disciplinary sanction to end the discrimination and prevent its recurrence;
  - The age and relationship of the Parties, including whether the Respondent is an employee of Mohawk Valley Community College;
  - The scope of the alleged sex discrimination, including information suggesting a pattern, ongoing sex discrimination, or sex discrimination alleged to have impacted multiple individuals;

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<sup>12</sup> 34 C.F.R. 106.45(a)(2).

- The availability of evidence to assist a decisionmaker in determining whether sex discrimination occurred; and
- Whether Mohawk Valley Community College could end the alleged sex-discrimination and prevent its recurrence without initiating these grievance procedures.

If after considering these and other relevant factors, the Title IX Coordinator determines that the conduct as alleged present as an imminent and serious threat to the health or safety of the Complainant or other person, or that the conduct as alleged prevents Mohawk Valley Community College from ensuring equal access on the basis of sex to its Education Program or Activity, the Title IX Coordinator may initiate a Complaint.

If the Title IX Coordinator does initiate the Complaint after making this determination, the Title IX Coordinator must notify the Complainant prior to doing so and appropriately address reasonable concerns about the Complainant's safety or the safety of others, including by providing supportive measures as listed in Section VI of these procedures.

#### Format of Complaint

As defined in IV(4) of these procedures, a Complaint can be an oral or written request to Mohawk Valley Community College that objectively can be understood as a request for Mohawk Valley Community College to investigate and make a determination about alleged sex discrimination at Mohawk Valley Community College.

#### Who can I report a Complaint to?

1. Reports may be filed with
  - a. The Title IX Coordinator or Deputy Coordinator in the absence of the coordinator:
    - i. Title IX Coordinator, (Utica Campus, PH354, Rome Campus, Office of the Dean, Plumley Complex; 315-334-7701)
    - ii. Title IX Deputy Coordinator - Dean of Student Life, Alumni College Center, Room 208A, 315-792-5394
  - b. Public Safety:
    - i. Department of Public Safety
      1. Utica Campus, Room 106, 315-731-5777 or by dialing '5777' from any on campus- phone.
      2. Rome Campus, Room 118, 315-334-3559 or by dialing '5777' from any on campus- phone.
      3. In an emergency, dial 911.
  - c. Electronically: Electronic Title IX Complaint form.
  - d. Reports may be filed privately with the Licensed Mental Health Practitioners in the Counseling Center on the Utica Campus, located in the Alumni College

Center, Room 104, (315) 792-5326, or on the Rome Campus, 130 Plumley Complex, (315) 792-5326.

## **B. Consolidation of Complaints<sup>13</sup>**

Mohawk Valley Community College may consolidate Complaints of sex discrimination against more than one Respondent, or by more than one Complainant against one or more Respondents, or by one Party against another Party, when the allegations of sex discrimination arise out of the same facts or circumstances. When more than one Complainant or more than one Respondent is involved, references below to a Party, Complainant, or Respondent include the plural, as applicable.

**Allegations Potentially Falling Under Two Policies** If the alleged conduct, if true, includes conduct that would constitute covered sexual harassment and conduct that would not constitute covered sexual harassment, the Title IX Grievance Process will be applied to investigation and adjudication of only the allegations that constitute covered sexual harassment.

## **C. Notice of Allegations<sup>14</sup>**

Upon initiation of Mohawk Valley Community College's Title IX grievance procedure, Mohawk Valley Community College will notify the Parties of the following:

- Mohawk Valley Community College's Title IX grievance procedure and any informal resolution process;
- Sufficient information available at the time to allow the Parties to respond to the allegations, including the identities of the Parties involved in the incident(s), the conduct alleged to constitute sex discrimination, and the date(s) and location(s) of the alleged incident(s);
- That Retaliation is prohibited; and
- The Parties are entitled to an equal opportunity to access the relevant and not otherwise impermissible evidence or an accurate description of this evidence.

If, in the course of an investigation, Mohawk Valley Community College decides to investigate additional allegations of sex discrimination by the Respondent toward the Complainant that are not included in the notice provided or that are included in a Complaint that is consolidated, Mohawk Valley Community College will notify the Parties of the additional allegations.

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<sup>13</sup> 34 C.F.R. 106.45(e).

<sup>14</sup> 34 C.F.R. 106.45(c).

## **D. Investigation<sup>15</sup>**

Mohawk Valley Community College will not issue a finding or Disciplinary Sanction arising from an allegation of Sex-Based Harassment without holding a live hearing (either through the Single Investigator/facilitator or 3-Person Hearing Panel Models) unless otherwise resolved through an informal resolution process as outlined in this Grievance Procedure.

The live hearing may be conducted with the Parties physically present in the same geographic location. Mohawk Valley Community College has the discretion to conduct the live hearing with the Parties physically present in separate locations, with technology enabling the decisionmaker and Parties to simultaneously see and hear the Party or the witness while that person is speaking. A Party may also request this option prior to the hearing.

Mohawk Valley Community College shall create an audio or audiovisual recording or transcript of any live hearing and make it available to the Parties for inspection and review as noted below.

At its discretion, Mohawk Valley Community College may delay or adjourn a hearing based on technological errors not within a party's control.

All proceedings will be recorded through audio recording. That recording or transcript will be made available to the parties for inspection and review upon request and at the student's expense (see Procedures).

Mohawk Valley Community College will provide for adequate, reliable, and impartial investigation of Complaints. The burden is on Mohawk Valley Community College—not on the Parties—to conduct an investigation that gathers sufficient evidence to determine whether sex discrimination occurred.

Mohawk Valley Community College will provide an equal opportunity for the Parties to present fact witnesses and other inculpatory and exculpatory evidence that is relevant and not otherwise impermissible. Mohawk Valley Community College will review all evidence gathered through the investigation and determine what evidence is relevant and what evidence is impermissible regardless of relevance.

Mohawk Valley Community College will provide each Party with an equal opportunity to access the evidence that is relevant to the allegations of sex discrimination and not otherwise impermissible, in the following manner:

Mohawk Valley Community College will provide an equal opportunity to access the relevant and not otherwise impermissible evidence. The Title IX Coordinator will notify the Parties when the

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<sup>15</sup> 34 C.F.R. 106.45(f).

relevant evidence is ready for inspection and the Parties will be permitted to access the evidence at least ten (10) business days prior to the hearing.

Mohawk Valley Community College will provide a reasonable opportunity to respond to the evidence or the accurate description of the evidence; and

Mohawk Valley Community College will take reasonable steps to prevent and address the Parties' unauthorized disclosure of information and evidence obtained solely through the grievance procedures. Disclosures of such information and evidence for purposes of administrative proceedings or litigation related to the Complaint of sex discrimination are authorized.

#### Impermissible Evidence<sup>16</sup>

The following types of evidence, and questions seeking that evidence, are impermissible (i.e., will not be accessed or considered), except by Mohawk Valley Community College to determine whether one of the exceptions listed below applies; will not be disclosed; and will not otherwise be used), regardless of whether they are relevant:

- Evidence that is protected under a privilege recognized by Federal or State law or evidence provided to a confidential employee, unless the person to whom the privilege or confidentiality is owed has voluntarily waived the privilege or confidentiality;
- A Party's or witness's records that are made or maintained by a physician, psychologist, or other recognized professional or paraprofessional in connection with the provision of treatment to the Party or witness, unless Mohawk Valley Community College obtains that Party's or witness's voluntary, written consent for use in its grievance procedure; and
- Evidence that relates to the Complainant's sexual interests or prior sexual conduct, unless evidence about the Complainant's prior sexual conduct is offered to prove that someone other than the Respondent committed the alleged conduct or is evidence about specific incidents of the Complainant's prior sexual conduct with the Respondent that is offered to prove consent to the alleged sex-based harassment. The fact of prior consensual sexual conduct between the Complainant and Respondent does not by itself demonstrate or imply the Complainant's consent to the alleged sex discrimination or preclude determination that sex discrimination occurred.

#### **Questioning Parties and Witnesses to Aid in Evaluating Allegations and Assessing Credibility**

When a party or witness's credibility is in dispute, and such dispute is relevant to evaluating one or more allegations of sex discrimination, the investigator and/or decisionmaker must have an opportunity to question any party or witness whose credibility is in dispute in a live format.

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<sup>16</sup> 34 C.F.R. 106.45(b)(7).

The investigator/decisionmaker will question Parties and witnesses to adequately assess a Party's or witness's credibility to the extent credibility is both in dispute and Relevant to evaluating one or more allegations of sex discrimination. This will occur during individual meetings with a Party or witness.

Each Party shall have the opportunity to propose questions that the Party wants asked of any Party or witness and have those questions asked by the investigator/decisionmaker during one or more individual meetings, including follow-up meetings, with a Party or witness, subject to the appropriate procedures outlined herein regarding the decisionmaker's advance evaluation of all questions. Each Party will be provided with an audio or audiovisual recording or transcript with enough time for the Party to have a reasonable opportunity to propose follow-up questions.<sup>17</sup>

Witnesses cannot be compelled to participate in the live hearing and have the right not to participate in the hearing free from retaliation.

If a party or witness provides statements that are otherwise permitted under the Title IX Final Rules, the decision-maker may consider those statements even if the party or witness does not appear at the hearing. The decision-makers may afford lesser weight to initial statements that cannot be corroborated or cross-examined during the live hearing.

## **E. Determination Regarding Responsibility**

Following an investigation and evaluation of all relevant and not otherwise impermissible evidence, Mohawk Valley Community College will:

- Use the preponderance of the evidence standard of proof to determine whether sex discrimination occurred. The standard of proof requires the decisionmaker to evaluate relevant and not otherwise impermissible evidence for its persuasiveness. If the decisionmaker is not persuaded by the evidence, under the applicable standard, that sex discrimination occurred, whatever the quantity of the evidence is, the decisionmaker will not determine that sex discrimination occurred.
- Notify the Parties in writing of the determination whether sex discrimination occurred under Title IX, including the rationale for such determination, and the procedures and permissible bases for the Complainant and Respondent to appeal, if applicable;
- Not impose discipline on a Respondent for sex discrimination prohibited by Title IX unless there is a determination at the conclusion of the grievance procedure that the Respondent engaged in prohibited sex discrimination.
- If there is a determination that sex discrimination occurred, the Title IX Coordinator will, as appropriate:

- Coordinate the provision and implementation of remedies to a Complainant and other people Mohawk Valley Community College identifies as having had equal access to Mohawk Valley Community College’s Education Program or Activity limited or denied by sex discrimination;
- Coordinate the imposition of any disciplinary sanctions on a Respondent, including notification to the Complainant of any such disciplinary sanctions; and
- Take other appropriate prompt and effective steps to ensure that sex discrimination does not continue or recur within Mohawk Valley Community College’s Education Program or Activity.
- Comply with the grievance procedure before the imposition of any disciplinary sanctions against a Respondent; and
- Not discipline a Party, witness, or others participating in the grievance procedure for making a false statement or for engaging in consensual sexual conduct based solely on the determination whether sex discrimination occurred.

## **SINGLE INVESTIGATOR/FACILITATOR MODEL**

If the Single Investigator/facilitator model has been chosen as the investigative format, Title IX requires that there be live questioning to assess a Party’s or witness’s credibility to the extent credibility is both in dispute and Relevant to evaluating one or more allegations of Sex-Based Harassment.

The investigator/facilitator/decisionmaker will question Parties and witnesses to adequately assess a Party’s or witness’s credibility to the extent credibility is both in dispute and Relevant to evaluating one or more allegations of Sex-Based Harassment. This will occur during individual meetings with a Party or witness.

Each Party shall have the opportunity to propose questions that the Party wants asked of any Party or witness and have those questions asked by the investigator/facilitator/decisionmaker during one or more individual meetings, including follow-up meetings, with a Party or witness, subject to the appropriate procedures outlined below regarding the decisionmaker’s advance evaluation of all questions. Each Party will be provided with an audio or audiovisual recording or transcript with enough time for the Party to have a reasonable opportunity to propose follow-up questions.

### **A. Determination Regarding Responsibility<sup>18</sup>**

#### **Standard of Proof**

Mohawk Valley Community College uses the preponderance of the evidence standard of proof to determine whether or not Sex-Based Harassment occurred This means that the investigation and

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<sup>18</sup> 34 C.F.R. 106.45(h); 34 C.F.R. 106.46(h).

hearing determine whether it is more likely than not that a violation of the Grievance Procedure occurred.

### General Considerations for Evaluating Evidence and Testimony

The decisionmaker is required to evaluate Relevant and not otherwise impermissible evidence for its persuasiveness. If the decisionmaker is not persuaded under the applicable standard by the evidence that Sex-Based Harassment occurred, whatever the quantity of the evidence is, the decisionmaker must not determine that Sex-Based Harassment occurred.

Determinations regarding responsibility may be based in part, or entirely, on documentary, audiovisual, and digital evidence, as warranted in the reasoned judgment of the decisionmaker. Decisionmakers shall not draw inferences regarding a Party or witness' credibility based on the Party or witness' status as a Complainant, Respondent, or witness, nor shall it base its judgments in stereotypes about how a Party or witness would or should act under the circumstances.

Generally, credibility judgments should rest on the demeanor of the Party or witness, the plausibility of their testimony, the consistency of their testimony, and its reliability in light of corroborating or conflicting testimony or evidence. However, credibility judgments should not rest on whether a Party or witness' testimony is non-linear or incomplete, or if the Party or witness is displaying stress or anxiety.

Decision makers will afford the highest weight relative to other testimony to first-hand testimony by Parties and witnesses regarding their own memory of specific facts that occurred. Both inculpatory and exculpatory (i.e. tending to prove and disprove the allegations) evidence will be weighed in equal fashion.

A witness' testimony regarding third-Party knowledge of the facts at issue will be allowed but will generally be accorded lower weight than testimony regarding direct knowledge of specific facts that occurred. (See detailed Procedures for more information regarding witnesses)

### Communication of the Determination in Writing

All determinations on whether Sex-Based Harassment occurred will be communicated to the Parties in writing, simultaneously.

The written determination will include:

- A description of the alleged Sex-Based Harassment;
- Information about the policies and procedures that Mohawk Valley Community College used to evaluate the allegations;
- The decisionmaker's evaluation of the Relevant evidence and determination on whether Sex-Based Harassment occurred;

- Any Disciplinary Sanctions Mohawk Valley Community College will impose on the Respondent, whether Remedies other than the imposition of Disciplinary Sanctions will be provided by Mohawk Valley Community College to the Complainant, and, to the extent appropriate, other Students identified by Mohawk Valley Community College to be experiencing the effects of Sex-Based Harassment, if there is a finding that Sex-Based Harassment occurred; and
- Mohawk Valley Community College’s procedures for Complainant and Respondent to appeal.

#### Timeline of Determination Regarding Responsibility

If there are no extenuating circumstances, the determination regarding responsibility will be issued by Mohawk Valley Community College within four business days of the completion of the hearing.

#### Finality of Determination

The determination regarding responsibility becomes final either on the date that Mohawk Valley Community College provides the Parties with the written determination of the result of any appeal, or, if no Party appeals, the date on which an appeal would no longer be considered timely.

### **Appeals<sup>19</sup>**

Each Party may appeal a determination regarding responsibility. To appeal, a Party must submit their written request for appeal within five business days of being notified of the decision, indicating the grounds for appeal.

For appeals resulting from dismissal of a Complaint, please see the section on Dismissal of Complaints.

#### Grounds for Appeal

The limited grounds for appeal available are as follows:

- Procedural irregularity that would change the outcome;
- New evidence that would change the outcome and that was not reasonably available when the determination whether Sex-Based Harassment occurred or dismissal was made; and

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<sup>19</sup> 34 C.F.R. 106.45(i); 34 C.F.R. 106.46(i).

- The Title IX Coordinator, investigator/facilitator, or decisionmaker had a conflict of interest or bias for or against Complainants or Respondents generally or the individual Complainant or Respondent that would change the outcome.

#### Additional Procedures for Appeal Process

Mohawk Valley Community College will notify the Parties of any appeal, provide the Parties a reasonable and equal opportunity to make a statement in support of, or challenging, the outcome, and will notify the Parties of the result of the appeal and the rationale for the result. The decisionmaker for the appeal shall not have taken part in an investigation of the allegations or dismissal of the complaint.

The submission of an appeal stays (or pauses) any sanctions for the period during which an appeal determination is being assessed. Supportive Measures and remote learning opportunities remain available while an appeal is being deliberated and before a final decision has been made.

Appeals consist of an appeal form and appeal narrative. The appeal narrative may be no longer than two pages, (including attachments). Appeals should be submitted in electronic form using ARIAL or TIMES NEW ROMAN, 12-point font, and single-spaced. Appeals that do not meet these standards may be returned to the Party for correction, but the time for appeal will not be extended unless there is evidence that technical malfunction caused the appeal document not to meet these standards.<sup>20</sup>

The appeal process at Mohawk Valley Community consists of two steps: 1) a Request for appeal based upon established criteria and 2) a hearing if the request for appeal was approved. Appeal requests will be decided by the Non-Academic Appeals Committee who will be free of conflict of interest and bias, and will not have served as investigator/facilitator, Title IX Coordinator, or hearing decisionmaker in the same matter. If the request is approved, alternate members (as/if available) of the Non-Academic Appeals Committee shall comprise the appeal hearing body.

The outcome of the appeal will be provided in writing simultaneously to both Parties and include rationale for the decision. The determination of the Appeal Decision-making Body is final.

### **Informal Resolution<sup>21</sup>**

#### A. Procedures for Entering and Exiting Informal Resolution Process

At any time prior to determining whether sex discrimination occurred under this Grievance Procedure, including prior to making a Complaint,<sup>22</sup> Mohawk Valley Community College may offer to a Complainant and Respondent an informal resolution process to resolve the allegations of Sex Discrimination, unless the complaint includes allegations that an employee engaged in

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<sup>21</sup> 34 C.F.R. 106.44(k); 34 C.F.R. 106.45(j).

<sup>22</sup> 89 33624-25.

sex-based harassment of an elementary school or secondary school student or such a process would conflict with Federal, State or local law.

The Parties may voluntarily elect to enter the Mohawk Valley Community College's informal resolution process at any time through an informed written Consent. This informed written Consent will include all terms of the elected informal process, including a statement that any agreement reached through the process is binding on the Parties.

No Party may be required to participate in informal resolution, and Mohawk Valley Community College may never condition enrollment, employment, or enjoyment of any other right or privilege upon agreeing to informal resolution.

The Parties may elect to leave the informal resolution process at any point until the informal resolution process is concluded. If a Party elects to leave the informal resolution process, the Grievance Procedure that the Parties paused will continue. In participating in the informal resolution process, the Parties understand that the timeframes governing the Grievance Procedure will temporarily cease, and only reinstate upon reentry into the Grievance Procedure.

Supportive Measures will be available, or continue to be available if already provided, during an informal resolution process, if elected to proceed. The Title IX Coordinator will also, to the extent necessary, take other appropriate prompt and effective steps to ensure that Sex Discrimination does not continue or recur within Mohawk Valley Community College's Education Program or Activity.

#### B. Notice Prior to Entry into Informal Resolution Process

Before the initiation of an informal resolution process, the Title IX Coordinator must provide to the Parties a written notice that explains:

- The allegations;
- The requirements of the informal resolution process;
- That, prior to agreeing to a resolution, any Party has the right to withdraw from the informal resolution process and to initiate or resume Mohawk Valley Community College's Grievance Procedure;
- That the Parties' agreement to a resolution at the conclusion of the informal resolution process would preclude the Parties from initiating or resuming Mohawk Valley Community College's Grievance Procedure arising from the same allegations;
- The potential terms that may be requested or offered in an informal resolution agreement, including notice that an informal resolution agreement is binding only on the Parties; and
- What information Mohawk Valley Community College will maintain and whether and how Mohawk Valley Community College could disclose such information for use in its Grievance Procedure if it is initiated or resumed.

### C. Determination to Approve Entry into Informal Resolution Process<sup>23</sup>

Even where the Parties agree to submit a matter to informal resolution, the Title IX Coordinator or other designated official must approve the decision to move the matter to the informal resolution process and may determine that informal resolution is not appropriate under the circumstances.

Factors that the Title IX Coordinator or other designated official may weigh in considering the appropriateness of the informal resolution process include, but are not limited to, the gravity of the allegations, whether there is an ongoing threat of harm or safety to the campus, whether the Respondent is a repeat offender, whether the alleged conduct would present a future risk of harm to others, and whether the Parties are participating in good faith. This determination is not subject to appeal.

At any time after the commencement of the informal resolution process, the Title IX Coordinator or other designated official may determine that the informal resolution process is not an appropriate method for resolving the matter and may require that the matter be resolved through the Grievance Procedure. This determination is not subject to appeal.

If informal resolution is approved or denied, Mohawk Valley Community College will provide the outcome in writing simultaneously to the Parties. If informal resolution is approved, the Title IX Coordinator shall also provide the information of the facilitator/investigator in writing to the Parties in a reasonable timeframe once the facilitator/investigator is assigned.

### D. Role of the Facilitator/Investigator

Informal resolution processes are managed by trained facilitators. The facilitator for the informal resolution process must not be the same person as the investigator or the decisionmaker in the recipient's grievance procedures. Any person designated to facilitate an informal resolution process must not have a conflict of interest or bias for or against complainants or respondents generally or an individual complainant or respondent.

All facilitator/investigators must have specialized training, required by law and regulation. Such training includes:

- Mohawk Valley Community College's obligation to address sex discrimination, including Sex-Based Harassment, in its Education Program or Activity;
- The scope of conduct that constitutes sex discrimination, including Sex-Based Harassment, under Title IX, including the definition of Sex-Based Harassment;

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<sup>23</sup> 34 C.F.R. § 106.44(k)(1)(i) provides that Mohawk Valley Community College has discretion to determine whether it's appropriate to offer.

- All applicable notification and information requirements related to parental, family, or marital status, including pregnancy and related conditions, and Mohawk Valley Community College’s response to sex discrimination;
- The rules and practices associated with Mohawk Valley Community College’s informal resolution process; and
- How to serve impartially, including by avoiding conflicts of interest and bias.

#### E. Contents of Informal Resolution Agreements

Potential terms that may be included in an informal resolution agreement between the Parties include but are not limited to:

- Restrictions on contact; and
- Restrictions on the Respondent’s participation in one or more of Mohawk Valley Community College’s education programs or activities or attendance at specific events, including restrictions Mohawk Valley Community College could have imposed as Remedies or Disciplinary Sanctions had Mohawk Valley Community College determined at the conclusion of the Grievance Procedure that Sex-Based Harassment occurred.

#### F. Breach of Informal Resolution Agreements<sup>24</sup>

If a Party breaches the resolution or if Mohawk Valley Community College has other compelling reasons, such as if it learns of any fraud by a Party in entering into the agreement, Mohawk Valley Community College may void the agreement and initiate or resume the Grievance Procedure.

#### Confidentiality:<sup>25</sup>

In entering the informal resolution process, the Parties agree that any testimony and evidence (including admissions of responsibility) they share or receive during the informal resolution process concerning the allegations of the Complaint are confidential while the Parties participate in the informal resolution process. No evidence concerning the allegations obtained within the informal resolution process may be disseminated to any person, provided that any Party to the informal resolution process may generally discuss the allegations under investigation with a parent, friend, advisor, or other source of emotional support, or with an advocacy organization. Should the Parties withdraw from the informal resolution process, information disclosed or obtained for purposes of the informal resolution process may be incorporated into the Grievance Procedure, provided that this information is disclosed and reviewed by the Parties under Mohawk Valley Community College’s Grievance Procedure.

### **Informal Resolution Options**

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<sup>24</sup> 89 FR 33625.

Mohawk Valley Community College offers the following informal resolution procedures for addressing Complaints of sex discrimination described under this Grievance Procedure

### Administrative Resolution

Should the Parties mutually determine to enter the informal resolution process, and the Respondent elects to accept responsibility for the allegations of the Complaint at any point during the informal resolution process, Mohawk Valley Community College may administratively resolve the Complaint.

Where the Respondent admits responsibility, the Parties will receive simultaneous written notification of the acceptance of responsibility, and the facilitator/investigator will determine the Respondent's sanction and other Remedies, as appropriate and consistent with institutional policy and make that recommendation to the Title IX Coordinator. The Title IX Coordinator will either agree with the recommendation, make a request to modify the recommendation or dismiss the recommendation. Upon completion of that step, the Parties will be given an opportunity to be heard at the sanctions hearing, including without limitation, the submission of impact statements. The Parties may be accompanied by their Advisor, but questioning of Parties or witnesses will not be permitted. The Parties will receive simultaneous written notification of the decision regarding sanctions and Remedies, which may be appealed according to the process described below.

### Mediation

The purpose of mediation is for the Parties who are in conflict to identify the implications of a Student's actions and, with the assistance of a trained facilitator/investigator, identify points of agreement and appropriate remedies to address them. Either Party can request mediation to seek resolution; mediation will be used only with the Consent of both Parties, who will be asked not to contact one another during the process. The Title IX Coordinator will also review any request for mediation and may decline to mediate based on the facts and circumstances of the particular case. Either Party has the right to terminate the mediation process and choose or resume another option for resolution at any time.

The mediation process will typically commence within 10 days after the Facilitator/Investigator receives Consent to mediate from both Parties and has made its determination to allow informal resolution to go forward. Mediation will continue until concluded or terminated by either Party, the facilitator/investigator, or the Title IX Coordinator. During mediation, any potential investigation will halt, and calculations for time frames will be stayed. If the mediation results in a resolution, the disciplinary process will be concluded, and the matter will be closed. If a resolution cannot be reached, the matter will be referred to the Title IX Coordinator to re-evaluate other options for resolution, including investigation or proceeding forward with the Grievance Procedure.

Informal resolution processes are managed by trained investigators and facilitated by the Title IX Coordinator. The investigator for the informal resolution process must not be the same person as the investigator or decisionmaker in the recipient’s formal grievance procedures if that were to be pursued as a change of course during the informal procedure. Any person designated to facilitate an informal resolution process must not have a conflict of interest or bias for or against complainants or respondents generally or an individual complainant or respondent.

During mediation, an investigator will guide a discussion between the Parties. In circumstances where the Parties do not wish to meet face to face, either Party can request “caucus” mediation, and the investigator will conduct separate meetings. Whether or not the Parties agree to meet face to face, each Party will be permitted to bring an advisor of their choice to any meetings who may be, but is not required to be, an attorney.

At the conclusion of the mediation, the Title IX Coordinator will facilitate the agreement that was reached between the Parties and memorialize it in writing for both parties to sign either in person together or separately or electronically. The Title IX Coordinator will monitor adherence to the proposed solution and close the matter when compliance is satisfactory.

### Appeal

Appeals are not permitted in the Informal Resolution process.

## **F. Dismissal of a Complaint**

### Bases for Dismissal

Mohawk Valley Community College may dismiss a Complaint of sex discrimination for any of the following reasons:

- Mohawk Valley Community College is unable to identify the Respondent after taking reasonable steps to do so;
- The Respondent is not participating in Mohawk Valley Community College’s Education Program or Activity and is not employed by Mohawk Valley Community College;
- The Complainant voluntarily withdraws any or all of the allegations in the Complaint, the Title IX Coordinator declines to initiate a Complaint under the bases described in these procedures, and Mohawk Valley Community College determines that, without the Complainant’s withdrawn allegations, the conduct that remains alleged in the Complaint, if any, would not constitute sex discrimination under Title IX or these grievance procedures even if proven; or
- Mohawk Valley Community College determines that the conduct alleged in the Complaint, even if proven, would not constitute sex discrimination under Title IX or these procedures. Note: Mohawk Valley Community College must make reasonable efforts to clarify the allegations with the Complainant before dismissing under this basis.

### Notice of Dismissal

Upon dismissal, Mohawk Valley Community College will promptly notify the Complainant of the basis for the dismissal. If the dismissal occurs after the Respondent has been notified of the allegations, then Mohawk Valley Community College will also notify the Respondent of the dismissal and the basis for the dismissal promptly following notification to the Complainant, or simultaneously if notification is in writing.

Mohawk Valley Community College will notify the Complainant that a dismissal may be appealed and will provide the Complainant with an opportunity to appeal the dismissal of a Complaint. If the dismissal occurs after the Respondent has been notified of the allegations, then Mohawk Valley Community College will also notify the Respondent that the dismissal may be appealed. Dismissals may be appealed on the following bases:

- Procedural irregularity that would change the outcome;
- New evidence that would change the outcome and that was not reasonably available when the dismissal was made; and
- The Title IX Coordinator, investigator, or decisionmaker had a conflict of interest or bias for or against Complainants or Respondents generally or the individual Complainant or Respondent that would change the outcome.

Appeal rights must also be outlined in any notification of dismissal of a Complaint, as outlined below.

## **G. Appeal of Dismissals and Determinations<sup>26</sup>**

Mohawk Valley Community College offers the following process for appeals from a dismissal or a determination whether sex discrimination occurred:

If the dismissal or determination is appealed, Mohawk Valley Community College will:

- Notify the Parties of any appeal, including notice of the allegations, if notice was not previously provided to the Respondent;
- Implement appeal procedures equally for the Parties;
- Ensure that the decisionmaker for the appeal did not take part in an investigation of the allegations or dismissal of the Complaint;
- Ensure that the decisionmaker for the appeal has been trained consistent with the Title IX regulations;
- Provide the Parties a reasonable and equal opportunity to make a statement in support of, or challenging, the outcome; and
- Notify the Parties of the result of the appeal and the rationale for the result.

When a Complaint is dismissed, Mohawk Valley Community College will, at a minimum:

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<sup>26</sup> 34 C.F.R. 106.45(i).

- Offer supportive measures to the Complainant as appropriate.
- If the Respondent has been notified of the allegations, offer supportive measures to the Respondent as appropriate; and
- Take other prompt and effective steps, as appropriate, through the Title IX Coordinator to ensure that sex discrimination does not continue or recur within Mohawk Valley Community College's Education Program or Activity.

The submission of appeal stays (or pauses) any sanctions for the pendency (or duration while the appeal is being deliberated and decided upon) of an appeal. Supportive measures and remote learning opportunities remain available during the pendency of the appeal.

If a Party appeals, Mohawk Valley Community College will as soon as practicable notify the other Party in writing of the appeal, however the time for appeal shall be offered equitably to all Parties and shall not be extended for any Party solely because the other Party filed an appeal.

Appeals consist of an appeal form and appeal narrative. The appeal narrative may be no longer than two pages, (including attachments). Appeals should be submitted in electronic form using ARIAL or TIMES NEW ROMAN, 12-point font, and single-spaced. Appeals that do not meet these standards may be returned to the Party for correction, but the time for appeal will not be extended unless there is evidence that technical malfunction caused the appeal document not to meet these standards.<sup>27</sup>

Appeal requests will be decided by the Non-Academic Appeals Committee. who will be free of conflict of interest and bias, and will not serve as investigator, Title IX Coordinator, or hearing decisionmaker in the same matter. If the request is approved, alternate members (as/if available) of the Non-Academic Appeals Committee shall comprise the appeal hearing body.

The outcome of the appeal will be provided in writing simultaneously to both Parties and include rationale for the decision. The determination of the Appeal Decision-making Body is final.

## **H. Retaliation**

Mohawk Valley Community College prohibits retaliation, including peer retaliation, in its Education Program or Activity. Upon receiving a Complaint alleging retaliation or upon receiving information about conduct that reasonably may constitute retaliation under Title IX, Mohawk Valley Community College will initiate its grievance procedure or, as appropriate, an informal resolution process.