

### **5.1 For Filing a Complaint**

- An aggrieved person shall submit a written complaint to the EOC within 3 months after the incident in order to promote swift investigation and action within the duration of all parties' tenure in the University.
- Complaints can be submitted to the Equal Opportunity Cell at the following email address: **eoc.chair@ashoka.edu.in**
- Where such a complaint cannot be made in writing, any member of the EOC shall render all reasonable assistance to the person for making the complaint in writing.
- Provided that the complainant remains under fear of retribution and does not file for longer than 3 months, they may appeal for consideration of the case despite the delay with a note describing the reasons for delay, up to a duration of 1 month after leaving the institution.
- Friends, relatives, colleagues, co-students, or any other associate of the victim may file the complaint in situations where the aggrieved person is unable to make a complaint on account of physical or mental incapacity (ensuring consent of the complainant).
- The incident(s) of discrimination will be addressed by the EOC if they involve any student members of the Ashoka community, whether the incident has taken place on the University premises or outside it, including online or virtual interactions or interactions by phone or text.

### **5.2 Interim Redressal**

The University may, over the duration of the enquiry period:

- transfer the complainant or the respondent to another section or department to minimize the risks involved in contact or interaction, if such a recommendation is made by the EOC
- grant leave to the complainant for a period of time ascertained by the EOC
- restrain the respondent from reporting on or evaluating the work or performance or tests or examinations of the complainant
- take strict measures to provide a conducive environment of safety and protection to the complainant against retaliation and victimization as a consequence of making a complaint of discrimination.

### **5.3 Process of Conducting Inquiry**

- On receipt of the written complaint, the EOC will initiate an inquiry.
- The EOC will send a copy of the complaint to the respondent within a period of 5 working days of receipt.
- If taking interim redressal measures, the complaint will be shared with the respondent within 10 working days of receipt.
- Upon receipt of the copy of the complaint, the respondent shall file their reply to the complaint along with the list of documents, and names and addresses of witnesses within a period of 10 days.
- The Cell will deliberate on the matter and a decision will be taken as per quorum. They may also call the complainant, respondent(s), or witnesses for a meeting to clarify any aspects of the case

that are unclear. The complainant may appear in person or authorize a representative to present the case.

- If anyone withdraws a case for any reason, they may re-file by submitting written notice of the reasons for withdrawing and filing again. They may only re-file a case once they receive approval to do so by the EOC.
- Members of the EOC should disclose any conflict of interest in any individual case, and recuse themselves from any decision-making on that case.
- The inquiry report, with recommendations, if any, has to be submitted within a period of 30 days from the date of the receipt of the complaint to the Executive Authority of the University. A copy of the findings or recommendations shall also be served on both parties to the complaint.
- An appeal against the recommendation can be filed within a period of 10 days by either party. If no appeal is received, the Executive Authority of the University shall act on the recommendations of the EOC and issue a show cause notice to be served on the accused party.
- Appeals can be made to the Vice Chancellor by emailing [vc.appeal@ashoka.edu.in](mailto:vc.appeal@ashoka.edu.in). An Appeals Committee would respond to such an appeal within a period of 10 days of receipt of the appeal. The Executive Authority of the University shall proceed after considering the recommendations of all parties who received the appeal.
- If the Executive Authority of the University decides not to act as per the recommendations of the EOC, they shall record written reasons for the same to be conveyed to the EOC and both the parties to the proceedings.

#### **5.4 Remedial Measures**

- The aggrieved party may seek conciliation in order to settle the matter. No monetary settlement should be made as a basis of conciliation. The University shall facilitate a conciliation process through the EOC, as the case may be, if it is sought. The resolution of the conflict to the full satisfaction of the aggrieved party wherever possible, is preferred to purely punitive intervention.
- The implementation of the EOC's recommendations will be done in accordance with the service rules of the University, if the offender is an employee. Depending on the nature of employment, the implementation will be decided by the HR department or the Dean of Faculty.
- Where the recommendations involve students, depending upon the severity of the offense, the University may:
  - (a) withhold privileges of the student such as access to library, auditoria, halls of residence, transportation, scholarships, allowances, and identity cards
  - (b) issue a strict warning on the record
  - (c) suspend or restrict entry into campus for a specific period
  - (d) expel and strike off name from the rolls of the institution, including denial of readmission, if the offense so warrants
  - (e) award reformatory punishments like mandatory counseling and/or performance of community services
- If the respondent is a repeated offender, the University shall take cognizance of this in deciding on the nature and quantum of punishment.

#### **5.5 Confidentiality**

- All complaints and investigations will be treated fully confidentially by the Cell. The identities of the aggrieved party or victim or the witnesses or the offender shall not be made public or kept in the public domain by members of the Cell.
- The identity of the complainant would not be revealed to the respondent without the explicit written consent of the complainant, to enable initial complaints reaching the Cell without fear of retaliation. However, the investigation process may require the disclosure of the identities of the complainant to the respondent and, if deemed necessary, to the parties involved during the investigation, and the Cell will take adequate steps to ensure that the complainant is protected from retaliation during and after the investigation and provides written consent before any such disclosure.
- After a complaint has been filed, all parties will be asked to maintain confidentiality about the process to ensure an impartial investigation. Any violation of confidentiality established to have taken place by a member/s of the cell would be grounds for the removal of that member/s from the cell. Any violation of confidentiality established to have taken place by any other member of the University who was notified during the investigation can be grounds for a follow-up complaint to the EOC by the complainant.
- Ashoka will ensure that information related to the investigation including the findings are stored confidentially, including:
  1. Details of the complaint/incident
  2. Steps that were taken to respond to the complaint/incident
  3. Any feedback provided by the Complainant/Respondent in relation to the process