



iRest Institute Grievance Procedure

As an essential part of maintaining the professional integrity of the organization, iRest Institute aims to address grievances brought to its attention using processes that are based on the values of respect, confidentiality, fairness, impartiality, and equality. To this end, iRest Institute has established an Ethics Committee (“Committee”) to review such grievances and determine the appropriate course of action on behalf of iRest Institute.

Role of the Committee

The fundamental role of the Committee shall be to respond to grievances regarding ethical conduct of students, teachers, staff and associates of iRest Institute (“iRest Community”) at the highest professional level, to make recommendations regarding the education of ethical standards of the iRest Community, and to endeavor to protect the public against harmful conduct by any member of the iRest Community.

1. Who can submit a grievance

1.1 Eligible Grievances

Grievances or disputes may arise between:

1. an iRest teacher and another iRest teacher; or
2. an iRest teacher and a member of the iRest Institute Executive committee, staff, or a contractor; or
3. a student or a person from the general public and an iRest teacher; or
4. a student or a person from the general public and a member of the iRest Institute Executive Committee, staff, or a contractor; or
5. a student or a person from the general public, and an iRest teacher, or a representative of the hosting organization of an iRest Institute event
6. a student or a person from the general public and iRest Institute materials, programs or operations

iRest Institute will not investigate grievances submitted anonymously.

1.2 Confidentiality

While iRest Institute will not investigate grievances submitted anonymously, the organization will withhold the name of a person submitting a grievance (“the complainant”) from the person who is the subject of the grievance (“the respondent”) if it is deemed necessary to protect privacy or ensure safety, and/or if required to do so by applicable law or regulation. If iRest Institute does not believe adequate investigation can be performed without the disclosure of the complainant’s name, then iRest Institute may choose not to investigate the grievance.

While iRest Institute will do everything it can to maintain confidentiality under the circumstances as outlined above, iRest Institute cannot guarantee confidentiality where the nature of the grievance itself might reveal the name of the complainant. Additionally, iRest Institute is committed to keeping the name of the respondent confidential while review of a grievance is underway, unless applicable law or regulation requires otherwise.

2. Grievance Resolution Procedure

2.1 Prior to Filing a Complaint

Prior to a person submitting a formal grievance, iRest Institute encourages all reasonable attempts to be made to resolve the grievance directly with the other person or persons involved, unless the complainant expresses concern regarding retribution or other adverse consequence, or in case of a safety issue or other necessity to protect privacy.

It is also expected that the person submitting the grievance has read the following documents, which can be found on the [iRest Institute Ethics webpage](#):

1. The iRest Institute Code of Ethics and Professional Conduct
2. The iRest Institute Grievance Procedure
3. The iRest Institute Scope of Practice

2.1.1 In the management of a grievance, both the complainant and the respondent have rights and responsibilities to assist the resolution of the grievance.

2.1.2 The complainant:

1. Is expected to take all reasonable measures to resolve the grievance directly with the respondent prior to raising a grievance through this procedure, except where there is reason to prevent direct resolution action, including situations where the complainant does not feel comfortable taking such action, or it would be inappropriate to do so.
2. Shall act in good faith and truthfully when lodging a grievance and participating in any associated resolution action.
3. Can expect to have their side of the story heard and considered.
4. Has a right to privacy and can expect their privacy to be managed as detailed in this procedure.
5. Has a responsibility to provide additional clarifying information requested by the Committee within designated timeframes, or where not possible to request an extension.
6. Is expected to make all reasonable efforts to try to understand the respondent's response.
7. Is expected to refer any alleged criminal behavior to the appropriate authorities where appropriate.

2.1.3 The respondent:

1. Shall act in good faith and truthfully when making a response to a grievance and participating in any associated resolution action.

2. Has a responsibility to provide responses and any additional clarifying information requested by the Committee within designated timeframes, or where not possible to request an extension.
3. Can expect to have their side of the story heard and considered.
4. Is expected to make all reasonable efforts to try to understand the complainant's grievance.
5. Has a right to privacy and can expect their privacy to be managed as detailed in this procedure.

2.2 Filing a Complaint

A grievance must be filed electronically using the electronic [Grievance Form](#). In the event that the grievance directly involves the iRest Institute Executive Director, the grievance must be filed electronically using a separate [Grievance Against Executive Director Form](#). In case of difficulty using the electronic form, contact the Committee directly at ethics@irest.org to request a printable version.

The grievance will outline the following information:

1. The nature of the grievance including the date(s), time, location, people involved and any other relevant information.
2. A statement describing the impact of the conduct that is the subject of the grievance.
3. The steps taken to resolve the grievance, including whether the grievance has been filed elsewhere.
4. An indication of whether or not the complainant requires anonymity to the subject of the grievance.
5. An explanation of the reason for requesting anonymity to the subject of the grievance.
6. What the person making the grievance would like the other person or persons to do or not do to address the grievance.
7. What assistance the person making the grievance hopes to receive from iRest Institute.
8. Any other suggestions for ways to resolve the grievance.
9. The person submitting the grievance will sign and date the completed form.
10. The person submitting the grievance will receive a copy of the completed form.

2.3 Receiving the Complaint

Submitted Grievance Forms will automatically be forwarded to the email addresses of both the Executive Director and the Committee (ethics@irest.org). The Executive Director has the discretion not to process a grievance if the grievance is filed more than 2 years after the matter has occurred. Should grievances be found to be of a subject matter other than a breach of ethical conduct by any member(s) of the iRest Community, the Executive Director will notify the complainant and suggest other means of communicating the grievance. iRest Institute reserves the right to not consider anonymous grievances and may suggest alternative approaches to resolving the grievance.

Each grievance received will be reported by the Executive Director to the Committee with an indication of whether or not Committee review is required. The Committee may request more information, if needed, on the reasoning for requesting or waiving Committee review. The Committee will then begin the review process for any grievances determined to constitute an ethics violation or otherwise warrant review by the Committee.

Within 14 days of receiving a grievance, the Executive Director will provide written acknowledgement to the complainant that the grievance has been received and will notify the subject of the grievance that a grievance against them has been received and forwarded to the Committee for review.

The notification to the respondent of the grievance will include an invitation to supply a written account and any documentation that the respondent deems necessary and relevant to the Committee's review of the grievance. The respondent will have 14 days from the date of notification of the grievance to respond. iRest Institute is committed to a fair and balanced process, including equal consideration for the information and perspectives provided by any subject of the grievance.

The Executive Director may appoint one or more people to act on behalf of the Executive Director and the appointees will have all the authority of the Executive Director in the handling of the Grievance. Appointees will report to and be subject to the authority of the Executive Director.

In the event that the complainant has submitted a [Grievance Against Executive Director Form](#) due to the direct inclusion of the Executive Director in the details of the grievance, the unique submission will be automatically forwarded to the email addresses of both the Committee and the Chairperson of the Board to ensure objectivity. In this case, the Committee will assess the eligibility of the grievance and continue forward with communications with both the complainant and the subject of the grievance on behalf of iRest Institute as otherwise performed by the Executive Director. While the Committee does not have the power to influence the details of the Executive Director's employment at iRest Institute, the Committee will report their decision directly to the Chairperson of the Board.

2.4 Addressing the Complaint: The Role of iRest Institute

The Committee will assess each grievance on a case-by-case basis and determine the most appropriate and useful role that iRest Institute can play given the context and nature of that grievance. The Committee, with the prior approval of the Executive Director, may seek independent advice on any matter related to the grievance process.

In some cases, the Committee may decide that it cannot play a useful role in resolving the grievance. In this instance, iRest Institute will make this clear to the person submitting the grievance and, where possible, recommend other approaches.

If the grievance is filed by a member of the Executive or Ethics Committee, that member will recuse themselves of any involvement in reviewing and determining any course of action related to the grievance.

If the grievance is being made against a member of the Executive Committee, Ethics Committee, staff, or a volunteer or contractor for iRest Institute, the same impartial consideration will be given to that grievance. The person against whom the grievance has been made will be notified as above, and will not be included in iRest Institute's handling of the grievance. If this is not possible, independent external assistance may be sought, such as contacting a mediator to participate in the resolution.

Specifically, cases that involve a substantiated breach of the [iRest Institute Code of Ethics and Professional Conduct](#) and/or the [Scope of Practice](#) by an iRest Teacher may lead to the revocation of the privileges to teach iRest, to identify oneself as an iRest Level 1 or Level 2 Teacher, and/or the revocation of the iRest Certification.

If the matter remains unresolved, iRest Institute will consider alternative ways of handling the grievance, including appointing a mediator or an external third party to address and manage the grievance. Where mediation is sought, the mediator cannot be a party to the dispute. A member of the Committee, Executive Director or staff may be the mediator if that is deemed appropriate, or an independent mediator may be recommended. It is preferable that each person involved in the grievance agrees on who is selected as the mediator, but if the parties cannot reach agreement, then the mediator will be appointed by the Executive Director.

The mediator will facilitate the process but will not make decisions for the parties. The mediator will give all parties every opportunity to be heard and ensure a fair and participatory process.

Both/all persons directly involved in the grievance will share the costs of the mediation equally, unless agreed otherwise. The mediator will give iRest Institute and the parties involved documentation noting that mediation occurred, who attended, and the outcome.

All attempts will be made to reach a resolution by negotiation and/or mediation as these processes encourage the conflicting parties to seek their own solutions, and can often lead to satisfying outcomes to all parties. However, if the mediation process does not resolve the conflict, then with the agreement of all parties to the grievance, an external party may address the grievance through a process of arbitration or the dispute may be referred to a formal dispute resolution service.

Failure to fully cooperate with the Committee in a timely fashion shall not prevent continuation of any proceedings and lack of cooperation itself constitutes a violation of the Code of Ethics.

2.5 Delivery of the Decision

The decision of the Committee will be submitted by the Executive Director on behalf of iRest Institute within 60 days following the original grievance form submission. Within 14 days of receiving the Committee decision, the Executive Director will notify both the complainant and the respondent of iRest Institute's response, including any resulting actions, consequences or requirements in writing via email. Should the grievance review process require more than 60 days time, the complainant and the subject of the grievance will be notified of the extension and a new expected timeline will be communicated.

2.6 Appeals

The persons involved in the grievance have a right to appeal to the Executive Director in writing within 14 days of the delivery of the decision.

The Executive Director will review all existing records relating to the grievance and the Committee decision for any procedural or policy-related errors, facts wrongly considered or dismissed, or other activities of the Committee that revealed an inadequate or unfair process. Based on the findings, the Executive Director will then determine whether the decision of the Committee shall be affirmed, modified, or overruled. The Executive Director will notify the complainant and the respondent, separately, of the result of the Executive Director's review of the appeal in writing within 14 days of receiving the appeal.

In the event that the Executive Director is directly involved in the details of the original grievance and the grievance instead is forwarded directly to the Committee, the appeal must be made to the Chairperson of the Board of Directors. The Chairperson will then exercise the same review and authority otherwise performed and held by the Executive Director as indicated above.

2.7 Completion

The iRest Institute wants to ensure that all grievances are resolved to completion, and commits to following the series of procedures outlined above.

The grievance procedure will be considered complete when the case has been processed, both the respondent and complainant notified of the outcome of the grievance and the period in which an appeal may be lodged has expired. The case file will then be annotated as closed.

Where the grievance has been referred to an external party for mediation, the Committee will maintain liaison with this external party during the external resolution process until the process is completed. The Committee will report the resolution of the grievance process to the Executive Director.

All documents generated during the review performed by the Committee will be held in confidence and the Committee will limit its communication of the progress of its review to the Executive Director or to a party delegated by the Executive Director so as to maintain maximum decision-making independence.

[Grievance Form](#)
[Grievance Against Executive Director Form](#)