

# Citizen Complaint Against Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI)

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Here is an overview of the citizen complaint process, described fully in Chapter 392-168 WAC, Complaints Against the Superintendent of Public Instruction—Investigation Of and Response to Complaints.

- Find this WAC online: Find this WAC online: <http://apps.leg.wa.gov/wac/default.aspx?cite=392-168-175>

A citizen complaint is a statement that OSPI has violated a federal or state law, or regulation that applies to a federal program.

- Anyone can file a citizen complaint.
- There is no special form.
- There is no need to know the law that governs a federal program to file a complaint.

Follow steps 1 through 4 to complete the citizen complaint process.

## STEP 1 Put Your Citizen Complaint against OSPI into Writing

A citizen complaint must be in writing, signed by the person filing the complaint. Make sure you include:

- **Contact Information of the Person Filing the Complaint.** Your name, address, telephone number and email, if you have one.
  - **Optional:** If someone is helping you to file this citizen complaint, include **1)** their contact information, and **2)** your relationship to them — for example, family member, a relative, friend or advocate.
- **The Facts — What, Who & When.** Include a description of the facts and dates, in general, of when you think the alleged violation happened.
  1. What specific requirement has been violated?
  2. When did this violation occur?
  3. Who you believe is responsible: names of all the people, and the program or organization involved.
- **The Resolution You Expect.** A proposed solution, if you think you know or have ideas about how the issue can be resolved.

## STEP 2 Mail or Fax Your Written Citizen Complaint to OSPI

Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction

**Attn: Citizen Complaint-Title I, Part A**

P.O. Box 47200

Olympia, WA 98504

Fax: (360) 586-3305

## STEP 3 OSPI Staff Process Your Complaint

Once federal program staff at OSPI receive your written complaint, here is what follows:

1. The OSPI employee responsible for investigating the alleged violation must begin an investigation within 10 calendar days of the receipt of your complaint.
2. OSPI may conduct an on-site investigation, if appropriate.
3. When the results of the investigation are complete, the designated employee must provide a written report to OSPI — the Title I, Part A office responsible for processing citizen complaints. This report is due no later than 60 calendar days after the receipt of your complaint.

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## **STEP 4 Final Decision by OSPI**

OSPI must send you a final decision related to your complaint no later than **10 calendar days** after we receive the report on the investigation. OSPI's final decision must state clearly — one of two results:

1. Denial of the allegations in your complaint and the reason for denial.
2. Proposal of reasonable actions that will correct the violation. These proposed actions must be completed within 30 calendar days of the date in the final decision.

In the event that you do not agree with OSPI's final decision, you may file an appeal directly with the Secretary of the U.S. Department of Education.

ATTN: Secretary of the U.S. Department of Education  
Lyndon Baines Johnson (LBJ)  
U.S. Department of Education Building  
400 Maryland Ave., SW  
Washington, DC 20202

### **Extend or Waive Timelines**

You — as the complainant — and OSPI can agree to extend the timelines once the citizen complaint process gets underway.

If exceptional circumstances exist with respect to a particular complaint, OSPI could extend the timelines and notify you, the complainant, in writing of this decision.