

What is a UCP complaint?

A complaint under the Uniform Complaint Procedures (UCP) is a written and signed statement by an individual, public agency, or organization alleging a violation of federal or state laws governing certain educational programs.

What agencies are subject to the UCP?

The UCP covers alleged violations by local educational agencies (LEAs) (school districts, county offices of education, and charter schools) and local public or private agencies which receive direct or indirect funding from the State to provide any school programs, activities, or related services.

What educational programs and services are covered by the UCP?

- Adult Education
- After School Education and Safety
- Agricultural Vocational Education
- American Indian Education Centers and Early Childhood Education Program Assessments
- Bilingual Education
- California Peer Assistance and Review Programs for Teachers
- Career Technical and Technical Education; Career Technical; Technical Training
- Career Technical Education
- Child Care and Development
- Child Nutrition
- Compensatory Education
- Consolidated Categorical Aid
- Course Periods without Educational Content
- Economic Impact Aid
- Education of Pupils in Foster Care, Pupils who are Homeless, and former Juvenile Court Pupils now enrolled in a school district
- English Learner Programs
- Every Student Succeeds Act / No Child Left Behind (Titles I–VII)
- Local Control Accountability Plans (LCAP)
- Migrant Education
- Physical Education Instructional Minutes
- Pupil Fees
- Reasonable Accommodations to a Lactating Pupil
- Regional Occupational Centers and Programs
- School Safety Plans
- Special Education
- State Preschool
- Tobacco-Use Prevention Education

What issues are not covered by the UCP?

Not all complaints fall under the scope of the UCP. Many concerns are the responsibility of the LEA, including classroom assignments, common core, grades, graduation

requirements, hiring and evaluation of staff, homework policies and practices, provision of core curricula subjects, student advancement and retention, student discipline, student records, the Bagley-Keene Open Meeting Act, the Brown Act, and other general education requirements. The LEA, however, may use its local complaint procedures to address complaints not covered by the UCP.

In addition, the following complaints are referred to other agencies for resolution and not subject to the UCP:

- Allegations of child abuse are referred to County Departments of Social Services, Protective Services Divisions, or appropriate law enforcement agency.
- Health and safety complaints regarding a Child Development Program are referred to the Department of Social Services for licensed facilities, and to the appropriate Child Development regional administrator for licensing-exempt facilities.
- Employment complaints are sent to the California Department of Fair Employment and Housing.
- Allegations of fraud are referred to the responsible Division Director at the California Department of Education (CDE).

How do I file a UCP complaint and how is it processed?

The Downey Unified School District's UCP complaint policies and procedures provide the information needed to file a local complaint. We are responsible to annually notify students, employees, parents/guardians, school and district advisory committees, appropriate private school officials and other interested parties of the District's UCP complaint policies and procedures, and the opportunity to appeal the District's decision to the CDE.

What are the responsibilities of the complainant?

- Receives and reviews the UCP complaint policies and procedures from the District.
- Files a written complaint by following the steps described in the District's UCP complaint procedures.
- Cooperates in the investigation and provides the District's investigator with information and other evidence related to the allegations in the complaint.
- May file a written appeal to the CDE within 15 calendar days of receiving the District's decision if he or she believes the District's decision is incorrect.
- Must specify the basis for the appeal and whether the District's facts are incorrect and/or the law is misapplied. The appeal packet must contain a copy of the original complaint to the District and a copy of the District's decision.
- Where applicable, within 35 calendar days of receiving the CDE's decision or report, may submit a request for reconsideration by the Superintendent of Public Instruction at the CDE. The CDE's decision or report will notify the complainant if there is a right to request

reconsideration. The request for reconsideration must designate the finding(s), conclusion(s), or corrective action(s) in the CDE's decision or report for which reconsideration is requested, and the specific basis for requesting reconsideration. The request must also state whether the findings of fact are incorrect and/or the law is misapplied.

What are the responsibilities of the District?

- Ensures compliance with applicable federal and state laws and regulations.
- Adopts UCP complaint policies and procedures consistent with the *California Code of Regulations*, Title 5 Sections 4600–4687.
- Designates a staff member to be responsible for receiving, investigating and resolving complaints and makes sure the staff member is knowledgeable about the laws/programs he or she is assigned.
- Must give the filing party an opportunity to present information and/or evidence relevant to the complaint.
- Protects complainants from retaliation.
- Resolves the complaint and completes a written report within 60 calendar days of receipt of the complaint unless extended by written agreement of the complainant.
- Must advise the complainant of the right to appeal the District's decision to the CDE within 15 calendar days of receiving the decision.

What are the responsibilities of the CDE?

The UCP authorizes the CDE to process appeals of the District's decision on UCP complaints; or, in certain specified situations, to intervene directly and investigate the allegations in the complaint. The CDE:

- Reviews, monitors and provides technical assistance to all Districts regarding the adoption of UCP complaint policies and procedures by the District's governing board.
- Refers a complaint to the LEA for resolution when appropriate.
- Considers a variety of alternatives to resolve a complaint or appeal when:
 1. The complainant alleges and the CDE verifies that, through no fault of the complainant, the District fails to act within 60 calendar days of receiving the complaint.
 2. The complainant appeals the District's decision if he or she believes the decision is factually and/or legally incorrect.
 3. When requested by the complainant, the CDE determines when direct intervention is applicable.
- Requires corrective action by the District if noncompliance issues are identified during the investigation.

- Provides monitoring and technical assistance to Districts to ensure resolution of findings of noncompliance.
- Where applicable, notifies the parties of the right to request reconsideration of the CDE's decision/report by the Superintendent of Public Instruction at the CDE within 35 calendar days of the receipt of the decision/report.
- For those programs governed by part 76 of Title 34 of the *Code of Federal Regulations*, notifies the parties of the right to appeal to the United States Secretary of Education.

Williams Complaints

A Williams complaint concerns instructional materials, emergency or urgent facilities conditions that pose a threat to the health and safety of pupils, and teacher vacancy or misassignment. They may be filed anonymously. The District must have a complaint form available for these types of complaints, but will not reject a complaint if the form is not used as long as the complaint is submitted in writing. Under applicable regulations, a notice must be posted in each classroom in each school notifying parents and guardians of the matters subject to a Williams complaint and where to obtain a form to file a complaint.

A Williams complaint must be resolved by the school principal or by the District superintendent or his or her designee. A complainant who is not satisfied with the resolution has the right to describe the complaint to the Board of Education at a regularly scheduled Board meeting. Except for complaints involving a condition of a facility that poses an emergency or urgent threat, there is no right of appeal to the CDE.

In the case of complaints concerning a condition of a facility that poses an emergency or urgent threat, a complainant who is not satisfied with the resolution has the right to file an appeal to the Superintendent of Public Instruction at the CDE within 15 calendar days of receiving the LEA's decision.

Additional Information

For additional information please go to the CDE Web site and search for Williams Facilities Complaints and Appeals or visit the UCP Web page at:
<http://www.cde.ca.gov/re/cp/uc>.

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Contacts for Programs and Services Covered Under the UCP

Adult Education, *Downey Adult School*: 562.940.6200

Career Technical Education, STEM; *Support Programs*: 562.469.6601

Child Care and Development (including State Preschool), *Early Education*; *Special Education*: 562.469.6582

Child Nutrition, *Food Services*: 562.469.6672

Discrimination, Harassment, Intimidation, Bullying, Student Lactation Accommodations, and LGBTQ Resources, *Education Equity UCP Appeals Office*; *Certificated Human Resources*: 562.469.6542

Education of Pupils in Foster Care, Pupils who are Homeless, and former Juvenile Court Pupils now enrolled in a school district, *Student Services*: 562.469.6565

Local Control Accountability Plans (LCAPs); *Instructional Support Programs*: 562.469.6569

Peer Assistance and Review Programs for Teachers; *Elementary Education*: 562.469.6567

Every Student Succeeds Act, compensatory education, consolidated categorical aid, economic impact aid, English learner programs, migrant education, school safety plans, *Instructional Support Programs*: 562.469.6569

Physical Education Instructional Minutes; *Elementary Education*: 562.469.6567

Course Periods without Educational Content, *Categorical Programs Complaints Management (CPCM) Office*: 916-319-0929

School Facilities (for Williams Complaints), *Certificated Human Resources*: 562.469.6542

Special Education; *Special Education*: 562.469.6582

Tobacco-Use Prevention Education; *Certificated Human Resources*: 562.469.6542

Pupil Fees; *Certificated Human Resources*: 562.469.6542

For further information or to file a Williams complaint you may contact:

Rena Thompson, Ed.D., Asst. Superintendent
 Certificated Human Resources
 11627 Brookshire Avenue
 Downey, CA 90241
 rethompson@dusd.net
 562.469.6542 (office) 562.469.6546 (fax)

Uniform Complaint Procedures

Authorized by:
 California Code of Regulations, Title 5 Section
 4600-4687



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