

**LEHIGH VALLEY HEALTH NETWORK
System Manual**

GME - RESIDENT AND FELLOW GRIEVANCES

SCOPE:

Lehigh Valley Health Network (LVHN) adopts this policy for the following selected licensed entities:

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Lehigh Valley Hospital | <input type="checkbox"/> LVHN Surgery Center – VNA Road |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Lehigh Valley Hospital – Dickson City | <input type="checkbox"/> Lehigh Valley Home Care |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Lehigh Valley Hospital – Hazleton | <input type="checkbox"/> Lehigh Valley Hospice |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Lehigh Valley Hospital – Pocono | <input type="checkbox"/> Pocono VNA / Hospice |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Lehigh Valley Hospital – Schuylkill | <input type="checkbox"/> Lehigh Valley Home Care – Schuylkill |
| <input type="checkbox"/> LVHN Children’s Surgery Center | <input type="checkbox"/> Lehigh Valley Home Care – Hazleton |
| <input type="checkbox"/> LVHN Surgery Center – Tilghman | <input type="checkbox"/> Transitional Skilled Unit |

This Resident and Fellow Grievances Policy applies to all graduate medical education programs sponsored by Lehigh Valley Health Network (each a “**Program**” or “**GME Program**”), to Program Directors and to each resident and fellow participating in a GME Program (individually a “**Trainee**” and collectively “**Trainees**”).

LINKS TO ATTACHMENTS: N/A

LIST OF ASSOCIATED FORMS: N/A

DISCLAIMER:

This policy and the implementing procedures are intended to provide a description of recommended courses of action to comply with statutory or regulatory requirements and/or operational standards. It is recognized that there may be specific circumstances, not contemplated by laws or regulatory requirements that make compliance inappropriate. For advice in these circumstances, consult with the Departments of Risk Management and/or Legal Services, as appropriate.

REVIEW:

Origination: 2 / 2023

Review / Revision:

Approved by: Joseph Patruno (Physician)	Approval Date: 06/24/2023
Version: 1	Publication Date: 06/24/2023
Original Creation Date: 02/01/2023	Next Review Date: 06/24/2026

I. POLICY:

ACGME STANDARDS

In accordance with Section IV.E. of the ACGME Institutional Requirements, the Sponsoring Institution must have written policies and procedures for submitting and processing resident/fellow grievances at the program and institutional level that minimizes conflicts of interest.

II. PURPOSE:

The purpose of this Policy is to provide guidelines for communication of issues, including concerns and complaints related to training and the learning environment, and to ensure that Trainees have a mechanism through which to express issues and concerns that minimizes conflicts of interest.

Lehigh Valley Health Network (“**LVHN**”) prohibits retaliation against any trainee or other individual who, in good faith, reports an issue or concern or participates in the review or resolution of an issue or concern related to graduate medical education or to any other operations at LVHN.

III. DEFINITIONS: N/A

IV. PROCEDURE:

A. General

LVHN encourages Trainees to report issues or concerns. Trainees shall be provided resources at orientation to ensure that they understand policies and protocols regarding how to appropriately report concerns or grievances, including issues or matters related to the clinical or learning environment. Trainees and Program Directors are encouraged to resolve differences through good faith collegial discussion when the circumstances are appropriate for resolution of an issue at the Program level.

B. Reporting

A Trainee with an issue or concern related to his/her graduate medical education experience, including his or her clinical and learning environment at LVHN or at a participating site, may communicate the concern or issue in person or by email to his/her Program Director or to the Program Director’s designee as per Program-specific guidelines. Issues or concerns may also be reported to the Office of Graduate Medical Education (“**OGME**”) in person, via email at Robert.sweeny.lvhn.org, or through the New Innovations Grievance Icon. Trainee communications regarding issues or concerns will be kept confidential to the extent practicable.

Certain issues or concerns, depending on their nature, may also be reported outside of LVHN’s graduate medical education leadership to the LVHN Human Resources Department. Issues reported to the LVHN Human Resources Department will be handled in accordance with Human Resources policies and procedures, which may include meeting with graduate medical education leaders and/or the Trainee.

C. Issue and Grievance Resolution

If an issue or concern is reported by a Trainee to his or her Program Director, the Program Director shall work directly with the Trainee to resolve the issue or concern.

If an issue or concern is reported by a Trainee to the OGME or to a LVHN graduate medical education leader, an OGME representative or a graduate medical education leader will work with the Trainee to resolve the issue, which may include elevating the issue or concern to the Designated Institutional Official (“**DIO**”). The OGME representative, graduate medical education leader or DIO (or a designee), as applicable, will review the issue and provide the Trainee a resolution of the issue or concern in writing, detailing the action steps and monitoring process for the resolution, if applicable.

If the issue or concern does not reach resolution to the Trainee's satisfaction, the Trainee may submit the concern in writing to the DIO for consideration by an ad hoc Dispute Resolution Subcommittee of the Graduate Medical Education Committee ("**GMEC**"). The Dispute Resolution Subcommittee will be comprised of a Program Director, a DIO, and a representative from LVHN's Human Resources Department. The Dispute Resolution Subcommittee will review the concern or issue and meet with the Trainee to discuss the concern, if desired by the Trainee. The Dispute Resolution Subcommittee will present a resolution of the issue or concern to the Trainee in writing, detailing any action steps or monitoring that will take place in connection with implementation of the resolution. The resolution may include further review or action by the LVHN Human Resources Department or by the GMEC.

A Dispute Resolution Subcommittee shall not include the Trainee's Program Director or Program Directors from the Department that includes the Trainee's Program if the Trainee's issue or concern relates to the Program Director or Department. In the event a potential conflict of interest is not discovered until further into a review, a Program Director from another Department will be appointed by the DIO to serve on the Dispute Resolution Subcommittee.

D. Exclusions/Additional Applicable LVHN Graduate Medical Education Policies

Program Directors or other individuals in receipt of a complaint, concern or issue from a Trainee related to discrimination or harassment (including sexual harassment) shall follow applicable LVHN Graduate Medical Education and institution policies governing Anti-Harassment. Trainees experiencing any form of discrimination or harassment are urged to immediately contact a Program Director, his/her Department Chair or the LVHN Human Resources Department.

Trainees with concerns or conflicts regarding adverse actions related to academic suspension, non-renewal, non-promotion, or dismissal should refer to the due process procedures set forth in the LVHN, Office of Graduate Medical Education: *Appendix II: Institutional Guidelines for Evaluation, Promotion, Remediation, and Discipline in the Graduate Training Agreement*.

E. Institutional Oversight

In fulfilling institutional oversight responsibilities, the GMEC through the Office of GME and applicable GMEC subcommittees, will monitor Program compliance with this Policy and program and institutional policies and procedures for Trainee grievances.

V. REFERENCES:

Section IV.E. of the ACGME Institutional Requirements