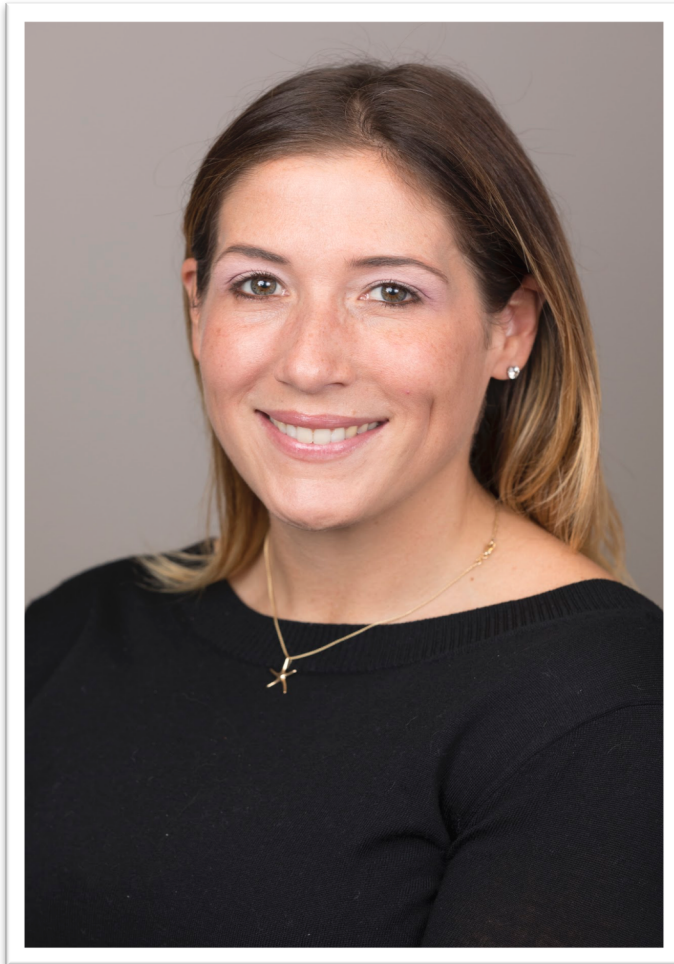


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Title IX Hearings in a Post Regulatory World

Chantelle Cleary
Senior Consultant

Meet Your Facilitator



Chantelle Cleary, J.D.
Senior Consultant

Chantelle Cleary is a nationally-recognized subject-matter expert in Title IX and related fields. She has more than 10 years of experience in the investigation and adjudication of sexual and interpersonal violence. She lectures extensively at universities and conferences throughout the U.S. on Title IX, VAWA, harassment, and implementation of best and emerging practices. Prior to joining Grand River Solutions, Chantelle served as the Director for Institutional Equity and Title IX at Cornell University, and before that as the Assistant Vice President for Equity and Compliance and Title IX Coordinator at the University at Albany. In these roles, she provided direct, hands-on experience in the fields of Title IX, civil rights, employment law, and workplace and academic investigations. Her responsibilities included focusing on diversity efforts, sexual assault prevention and training, affirmative action, and protecting minors on campus.

About Us

Grand River Solutions provides Title IX, equity, and Clery Act consulting services. Together, our experts have decades of direct, on-campus experience at both small and large, public and private institutions. This practical expertise derived from years of hands-on experience enables our team to offer customized solutions unique to your educational institution's needs. Grand River has a suite of creative, cost-effective and compliant solutions to help schools meet their needs in innovative ways.

Today's Agenda

01

Regulatory Overview

05

Hearings Logistics

02

The Infrastructure for Compliance

06

Evidentiary Issues

03

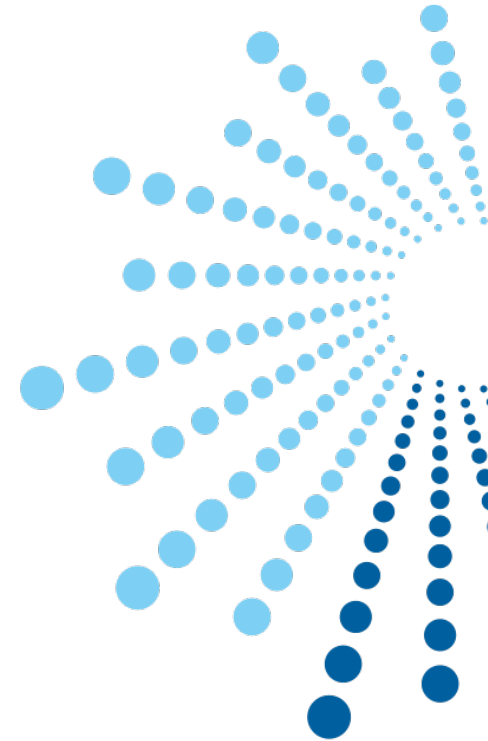
Roles and Responsibilities

07

Post-Hearing

04

Pre-Hearing Tasks



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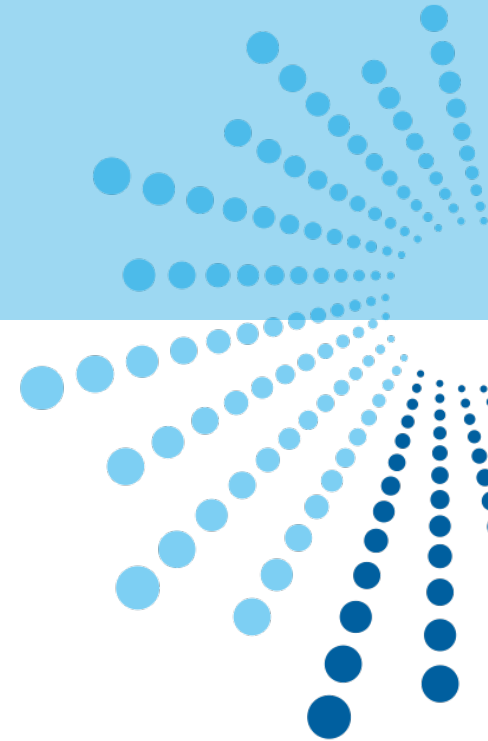


Regulatory Overview

Narrowed jurisdiction and expansive procedural requirements

01

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Title IX of the Education Amendments Act of 1972

"No person in the United States shall, on the basis of sex, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any education program or activity receiving Federal financial assistance."

“...on the basis of sex.”

August 31, 2020 Letter of Notification

“However, with respect to complaints that a school’s action or policy excludes a person from participation in, denies a person the benefits of, or subjects a person to discrimination under an education program or activity, on the basis of sex, the Bostock opinion guides OCR’s understanding that discriminating against a person based on their homosexuality or identification as transgender generally involves discrimination on the basis of their biological sex.”

Title IX Applies to All Forms Discrimination on the basis of sex

- Sexual Harassment
- Achievement Awards
- Athletics
- Benefits
- Financial Aid
- Leaves of absence and re-entry policies
- Opportunities to join groups
- Pay rates
- Recruitment
- Retention Rates
- Safety
- Screening Exams
- Sign-on Bonuses
- Student and Employee Benefits
- Thesis Approvals
- Vocational or College Counseling
- Research opportunities

The May 2020 Title IX Regulations Cover A Narrow Scope of Title IX

- Sexual Harassment
- Achievement Awards
- Athletics
- Benefits
- Financial Aid
- Leaves of absence and re-entry policies
- Opportunities to join groups
- Pay rates
- Recruitment

**Conduct Constituting
Sexual Harassment
as Defined in
Section 106.30**

Section 106.30: Sexual Harassment

Sexual harassment means conduct on the basis of sex that satisfies one or more of the following:

- (1) An **employee** of the recipient conditioning the provision of an aid, benefit, or service of the recipient on an individual's participation in unwelcome sexual conduct;
- (2) Unwelcome conduct determined by a reasonable person to be so **severe, pervasive, and objectively offensive** that it **effectively denies** a person equal access to the recipient's education program or activity; or
- (3) "**Sexual assault**" as defined in 20 U.S.C. 1092(f)(6)(A)(v), "**dating violence**" as defined in 34 U.S.C. 12291(a)(10), "**domestic violence**" as defined in 34 U.S.C. 12291(a)(8), or "**stalking**" as defined in 34 U.S.C. 12291(a)(30).

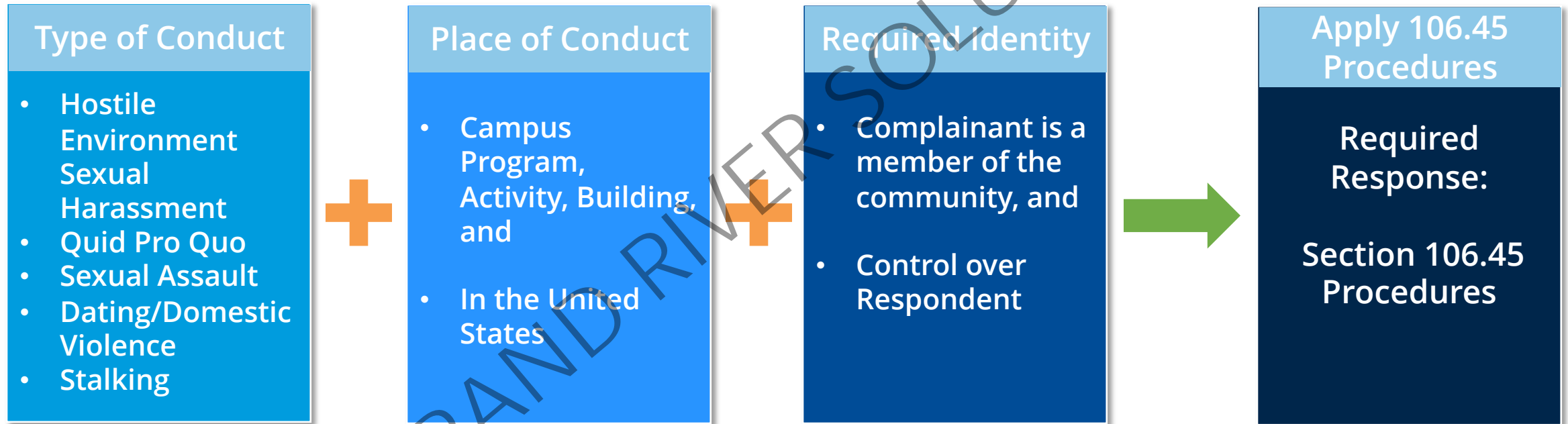
Title IX Application Post May 2020 Regulations

All Forms of Sex
Discrimination, Retaliation

106.30 Sexual Harassment:

- Hostile Environment
- Quid Pro Quo
- Sexual Assault
- Dating/Domestic Violence
- Stalking

Title IX Application Post May 2020 Regulations



First Question

What Happened?

Does the Complaint Allege:

1. sexual harassment in which the harassment was so severe and pervasive that it denied the complainant equal access to an educational program or activity, or denied the employee the equal ability to continue their work;
2. Dating Violence, Domestic Violence, Stalking, or Sexual Assault;
3. A complaint of quid pro quo sexual harassment by an employee respondent against a student.



Second Question

Where Did the Conduct
Occur?

Did the conduct occur:

1. The incident(s) occurred at school, within the United States;
2. The incident(s) occurred as part of a recognized program in a building under the school's control, and within the United States;
3. The incident(s) was part of one of the school's programs or activities, such as part of a field trip or team athletic event, and within the United States.



Third Question

Who Experienced the
Conduct?

Is the Complainant:

1. a student (whether applicant, admitted, or currently enrolled); or
2. An employee (applicant, hired but not yet working, or employed),
3. Or someone who is otherwise still accessing or attempting to access a university program or activity, within the United States.



Fourth Question

Who is the Accused?

Is the Respondent:

1. A student (whether applicant, admitted, or currently enrolled), or
2. An employee (applicant, hired but not yet working, or employed).
3. Someone else that the institution may have control over (ie, a contractor, an alum, or a vendor)





Apply the 106.45 Procedures

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**What do we do
about misconduct
that does not fall
within this narrow
scope?**



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**And what about
state law?**

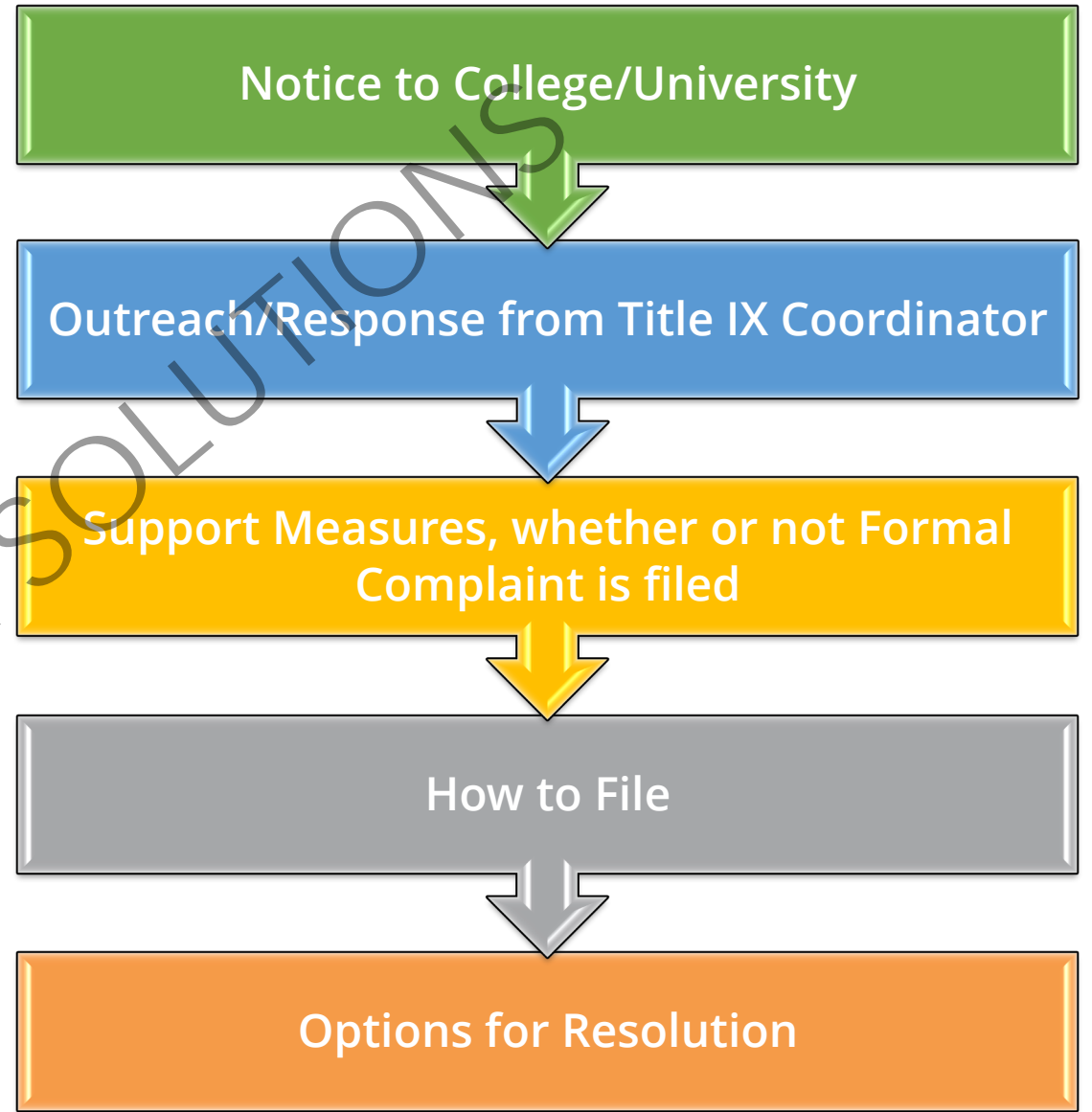


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Before The Investigation



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Procedural Requirements for Investigations



NOTICE TO BOTH
PARTIES



EQUAL
OPPORTUNITY TO
PRESENT EVIDENCE



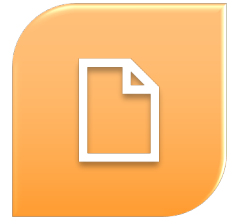
AN ADVISOR OF
CHOICE



WRITTEN
NOTIFICATION OF
MEETINGS, ETC.,
AND SUFFICIENT
TIME TO PREPARE



OPPORTUNITY TO
REVIEW ALL
EVIDENCE, AND 10
DAYS TO SUBMIT A
WRITTEN
RESPONSE TO THE
EVIDENCE PRIOR
TO COMPLETION
OF THE REPORT



REPORT
SUMMARIZING
RELEVANT
EVIDENCE AND 10
DAY REVIEW OF
REPORT PRIOR TO
HEARING

Procedural Requirements for Hearings

Must be live, but can be conducted remotely

No Compelling participation

Standard of proof used may be preponderance of the evidence or clear and convincing; standard must be the same for student and employee matters

Cross examination must be permitted and must be conducted by advisor of choice or provided by the institution

Decision maker determines relevancy of questions and evidence offered

Exclusion of Evidence if no cross examination

Written decision must be issued that includes finding and sanction

What do we
need to do
all of this?



Space



Technology



Clear & Comprehensive Procedures



Staff



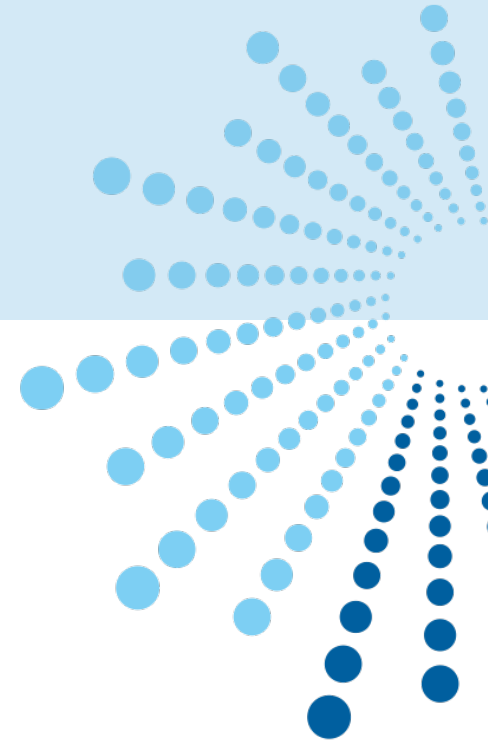
Expertise and Confidence



The Infrastructure for Compliance

02

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Purpose of the Hearing

Why does it matter?

Review and
Assess
Facts



Make
Findings of
Fact



Determine
Responsibility/
Findings of
Responsibility



Determine
Sanction
and
Remedy

The Essential Elements of All Hearings

Clear Procedures

Due/Fair Process

Fair, Equitable, and Neutral

Consistency

Trauma Informed

Well Trained Personnel

Clear Procedures

The Process

- Pre-hearing process, submission of evidence, opening statements, other statements, closing statements, findings, impact statements, etc.

The Players

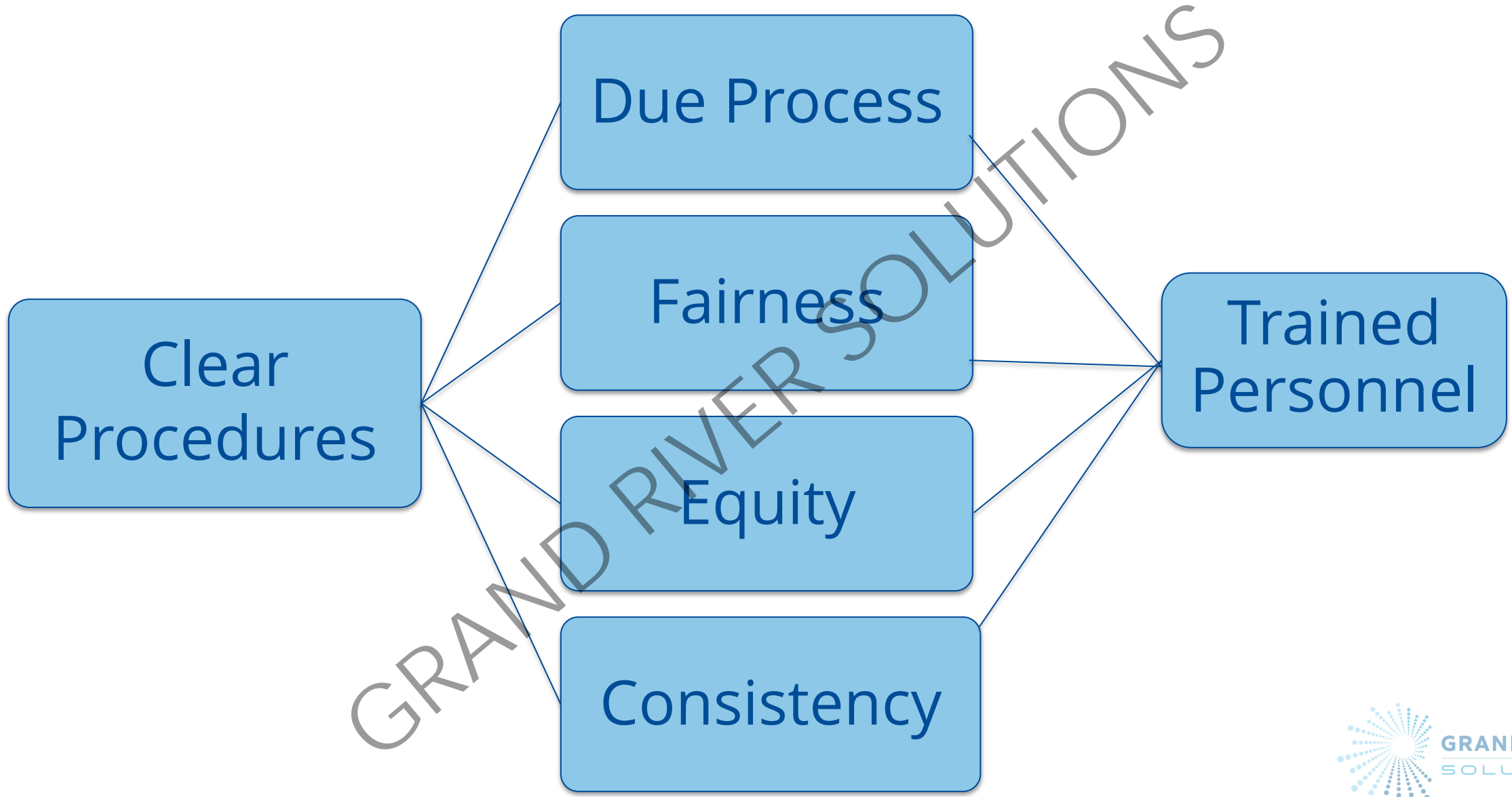
- The roles of all participants

The Evidence

- Relevancy, Exclusions, Timing of submission, how to submit, who decides, etc.

The Outcome

- Deliberations; Notice; manner and method communicated.



Considerations for the Physical Space

- Room location and set-up
 - Entrances, exits, and proximity
- Privacy screens & partitions
- Technology
- Hallway control
- Space for extra visitors

Hearing Room Configuration

Investigator & Hearing
Coordinator

Hearing Officer

Witness

Respondent &
Advisor

Complainant &
Advisor

Remote Participation

- **In whole or in part?**
- **Communication considerations**
 - Chat function or emails
- **Private consultation between parties and advisors**
 - Use of breakout rooms
 - Communication considerations
- **Practice runs**
- **Connectivity Considerations**

Other Considerations

Time Limits

Breaks

Formality,
Order and
Gate-
Keeping

Handling
disruptions
and
interruption

Poor
behavior?

Recording



Roles and Responsibilities

People, Functions, and Impartiality

03

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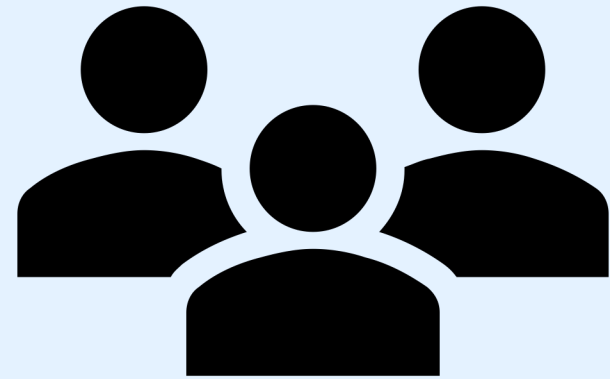


Hearing Participants

Complainant	the person bringing the complaint
Respondent	the person against whom the complaint has been filed
Advisor	will conduct cross examination; role varies depending on school
Investigator	summarizes the investigation, answers questions
Witnesses	present in the room only when answering questions
Hearing Coordinator/Officer	coordinates all aspects of the hearing, ensures a fair and equitable hearing process, acts as a resource for all participants
Decision-Maker	makes decision as to whether policy was violated
Administrative Staff	assists with the logistical coordination of the people, the space, technology, etc.

Other Considerations Panel

- Number of panelists?
- Can you have a panel of one?
- Must finding be unanimous?
- Internal, external, or some combination?



Who is
NOT
in the
Hearing?

General Counsel

Parents

Student newspaper

Interested faculty

Title IX Coordinator

The Players

Hearing Advisors

- Will conduct examination/cross
- Roles
- Training/Qualifications
- Communicating their role
- Enforcing their role



The Players

Support Person

- Optional
- Silent
- Roles
- Communicating their role
- Enforcing their role



The Players

The Coordinator/Chair

- Oversees the Process
- Maintains order/decorum
- Supports the panel
- Makes ruling
- Voting or non-voting
- Writes the decision
- Trained

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The Players

The Decision Maker

- May be Hearing Chair or on panel
- Determines whether policy was violated
- Cannot be investigator, Title IX Coordinator, or Appeals Officer



The Players

The Panel

- Fact finders
- Number of panelists?
- Composition?
- Makes the finding
- Unanimous?
- Pool?
- Recruitment and retention



Impartiality

WHAT DOES THIS *REALLY* MEAN?

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Impartiality: Avoiding Prejudgment and Bias

“The Department’s interest in ensuring impartial Title IX proceedings that avoid prejudgment of the facts at issue necessitates a broad prohibition on sex stereotypes so that decisions are made on the basis of individualized facts and not on stereotypical notions of what “men” or “women” do or do not do.”

Impartiality: Avoiding Prejudgment and Bias

Practical application of these concepts in investigations

Do not rely on cultural “rape myths” that essentially blame complainants

Do not rely on cultural stereotypes about how men or women purportedly behave

Do not rely on gender-specific research data or theories to decide or make inferences of relevance or credibility in particular cases

Recognize that anyone, regardless of sex, gender, gender identity or sexual orientation, can be a victim or perpetrator of sexual assault or other violence

Avoid any perception of bias in favor of or against complainants or respondents generally

Employ interview and investigation approaches that demonstrate a commitment to impartiality

Impartiality: Avoiding Bias

Department also rejected commenters' arguments that individuals should be disqualified from serving as investigators because of past personal or professional experience

"Department encourages [schools] to apply an objective (whether a reasonable person would believe bias exists), common sense approach to evaluating whether a particular person serving in a Title IX role is biased" WHILE

"exercising caution not to apply generalizations that might unreasonably conclude that bias exists (for example, assuming that all self-professed feminists, or self-described survivors, are biased against men, or that a male is incapable of being sensitive to women, or that prior work as a victim advocate, or as a defense attorney, renders the person biased for or against complainants or respondents"

Impartiality: Avoiding Conflicts of Interest

Commenters argued that investigators and hearing officers employed by schools have an “inherent conflict of interest” because of their affiliation with the school, so Department should require investigations and hearings to be conducted by external contractors

Department noted that some of those commenters argued that this resulted in bias against complainants, and some argued that this resulted in bias against respondents

Department’s response: Department’s authority is over schools, not individual investigators and other personnel, so Department will focus on holding school’s responsible for impartial end result of process, without labeling certain administrative relationships as per se involving conflicts of interest

Impartiality: Avoiding Prejudgment, Bias, and Conflicts of Interest

Bottom line

- Follow facts of every individual case
- Investigate in manner that will not allow even a perception of prejudgment or bias for or against any party

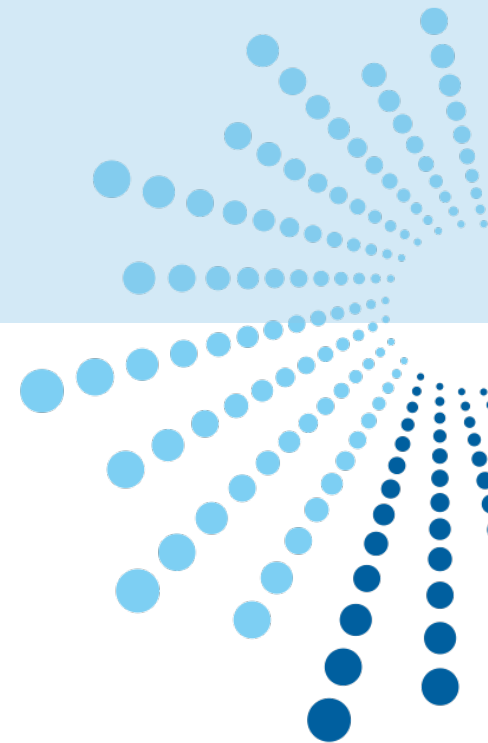


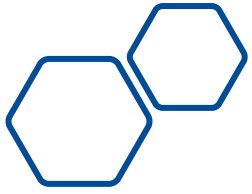
Pre-Hearing Tasks

What should be done in advance of the hearing

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Logistics

Scheduling participants

Reserving space

Provision of accommodations

Requests for delays;
adjournments

The Parties and their Advisors, and the Witnesses

Pre-hearing instructions

- Via conference or meeting
- In writing

Set expectations

- Format
- Roles of the parties
- Participation
- Evidence
- Decorum
- Impact of not following rules

The Decision Maker(s)



Review evidence and report



Review applicable policy and procedures



Preliminary analysis of the evidence



Determine areas for further exploration



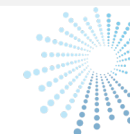
Develop questions of your own



Anticipate the party's questions



Anticipate challenges or issues





Conducting the Hearing

05

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Opening Instructions by the Chair

- Set the stage
- Reiterate charges
- Reiterate rules and expectations
- Reiterate logistics for the day

This should be scripted and used consistently.



Opening Statements

- Permitted, but not required
- Policy should include purpose and scope
- If permitted, consider
 - Requiring submission prior to hearing
 - Word limit
 - Time limit

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Testimony

Procedures should be clear about:

- Order of/parties and witnesses
 - Could simply leave this up to the decision maker
- Order of examination
 - Questioning by the decision maker
 - Cross examination by the advisor
 - Will the advisor be permitted to question their own party?
 - Will there be a second round of questioning?
- Consistency is essential. Consider putting this all in your procedures.

Cross Examination

Who does it?

- Must be conducted by the advisor
- If party does not appear or does not participate, advisor can appear and cross
- If party does not have an advisor, institution must provide one

Cross Examination

Permissible Questions

- Questions must be relevant
- Not relevant
 - Duplicative questions
 - Questions that attempt to elicit information about
 - Complainants prior sexual history
 - Privileged information
 - Mental health

Cross Examination

Role of the Decision Maker

- Rulings by Decision Maker required
 - Explanation only required where question not permitted

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Cross Examination

Impact of Not Appearing

- Exclusion of all statements of that party
- Exception- DOE Blog
- What if a party or witness appears, but does not answer all questions

Closing Statements

- Permitted, but not required
- Policy should include purpose and scope
- If permitted, consider
 - Time limit
 - Submission in writing after the hearing

Common Challenges

- Non-appearance by a party or witness
- Non-appearance by an advisor
- Party or witness appears but declines to answer some (or all) questions
- Disruptions
- Maintaining Decorum

Tips for Increasing Efficiency

01

Be prepared

02

Have an
experienced
chair

03

Have back up
plans for
technology
issues

04

Require pre-
hearing written
submissions

- of opening statements
- of questions in

Being Trauma-Informed

Training your panel/adjudicators

- Asking questions
- Asking “why”
- Filtering questions of the parties

Preparing parties

- Reviewing the investigation report
- Sharing their story again
- Answering questions again

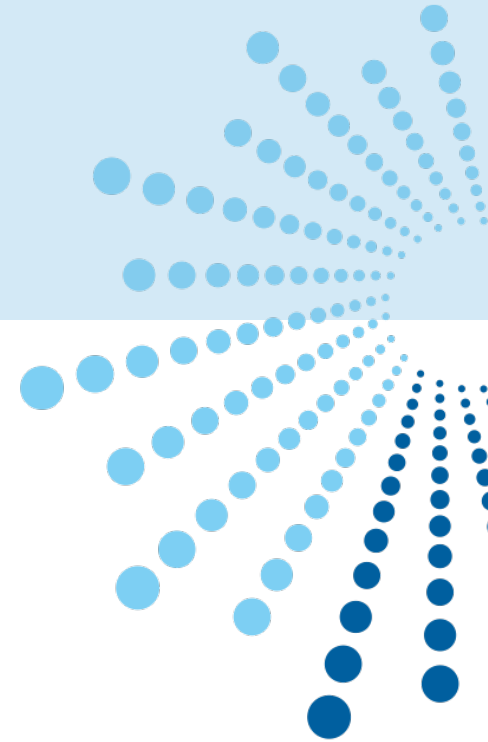
The attraction of prurient interests



Evidentiary Issues

06

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Evidence

“Something (including testimony, documents, tangible objects) that tends to prove or disprove the existence of an alleged fact; anything presented to the senses and offered to prove the existence or non-existence of a fact.”

Black’s Law Dictionary

Types of Evidence

Direct Evidence

Evidence that is based on personal knowledge or observation and that, if true, proves a fact without inference or presumption.

Circumstantial Evidence

Evidence based on inference and not on personal knowledge or observation.

Corroborating Evidence

Evidence that differs from but strengthens or confirms what other evidence shows

Non-Testimonial Evidence

Text Messages

Social Media posts

Social Media Communications

Emails

Surveillance

Videos

Photographs

Police Body Camera Footage

Swipe Records

Medical Records

Phone Records

Audio Recordings

Some Other Evidentiary Issues

- Character evidence
- Polygraph examinations
- SANE reports
- Past conduct of complainant, respondent

EVIDENCE

Evaluating the Evidence

Is it relevant?

Evidence is relevant if it has a tendency to make a material fact more or less likely to be true.



Is it authentic?

Is the item what it purports to be?



Is it credible?

Is it convincing?



Is it reliable?

Can you trust it or really on it?



What weight, if any, should it be given?

Weight is determined by the finder of fact!

Logical connection between the evidence and facts at issue

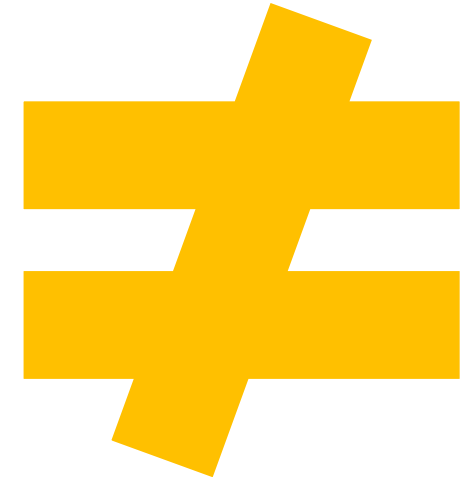
Assists in coming to the conclusion – it is “of consequence”

Tends to make a fact more or less probable than it would be without that evidence



Relevance is Not...

- Strength of the evidence
- Believability of the evidence
- Based on type of evidence: circumstantial, direct
- Based on complicated rules of court



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Assessing Authenticity

Investigating the products of the investigation



Never assume that an item of evidence is authentic.



Ask questions, request proof.



Investigate the authenticity if necessary.

Assessing Credibility and Reliability

No formula exists, but consider the following:

- opportunity to view
- ability to recall
- motive to fabricate
- plausibility
- consistency
- character, background, experience, and training
- coaching
- Your own bias and limited experience

Assessing Reliability

Inherent plausibility

Logic

Corroboration

Past record

Other indicia of reliability

Credibility Versus Reliability

Reliable Evidence

- I can trust the consistency of the person's account of their truth.
- It is probably true and I can rely on it.

Credibility

- I trust their account based on their tone and reliability.
- They are honest and believable.
- It might not be true, but it is worthy of belief.
- It is convincingly true.
- The witness is sincere and speaking their real truth.

Being Convinced

It Is True, or Biased Conclusion?

**A credible witness may give
unreliable testimony**

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After the Hearing

06

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Deliberations

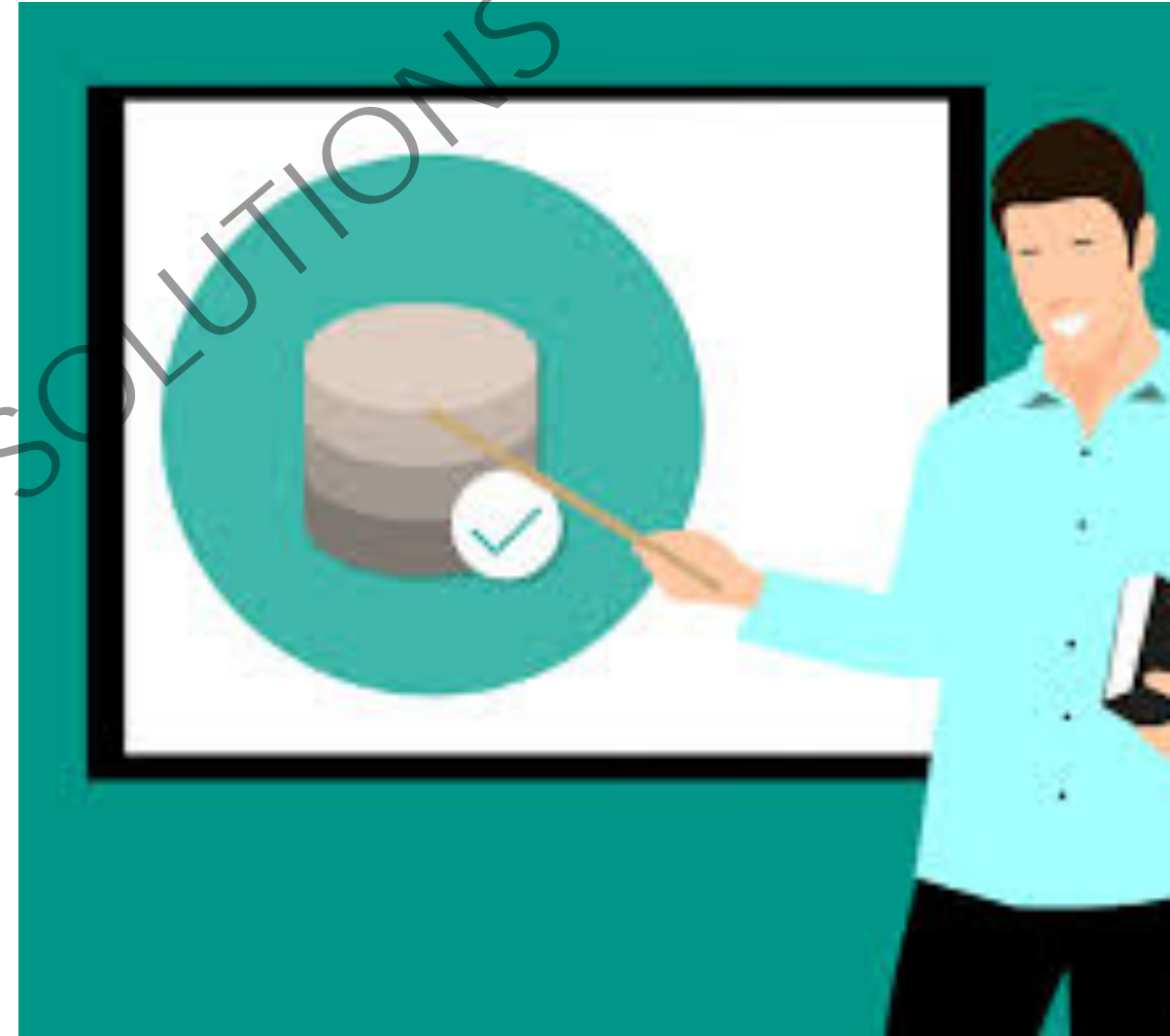
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Weighing the Evidence & Making A Determination

- 1) Evaluate the evidence collected to determine what factually is more likely to have occurred, and then
- 2) Analyze whether the conduct that happened constitutes a violation of the school's policies

Policy Analysis

- Break down the policy into elements
- Organize the facts by the element to which they relate



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Preponderance of the Evidence

- More likely than not
- Does not mean 100% true or accurate
- A finding = There was sufficient reliable, credible evidence to support a finding, by a preponderance of the evidence, that the policy was violated



Final Report

- The allegations
- Description of all procedural steps
- Findings of fact
- Conclusion of application of facts to the policy
- Rationale for each allegation
- Sanctions and Remedies
- Procedure for appeal



Questions?



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