Chapter 80: Title Programs

Rule 80.1 Title I Complaint Procedures

1. Guidelines

When a complaint cannot be resolved at the LEA level, the complaint must be submitted in writing to the Mississippi Department of Education, Office of Federal Programs. Persons issuing verbal complaints will be asked to complete a written complaint form prior to any official investigation, or assisted with the completion of the complaint form.

The complaint must include the name and address of the person submitting the complaint and a description of the complaint. The complaint must also include a statement which assures that to the best of the complainant's knowledge, the agency has violated a requirement of a federal statute or regulation that applies to an applicable program. In addition, the facts on which the statement is based and the specific requirement allegedly violated must be included.

Complaints should be sent to the Bureau Director, Office of Federal Programs. The mailing address is: Mississippi Department of Education, Office of Federal Programs, Suite 111 Central High School, Post Office Box 771, Jackson, Mississippi 39205-0771. The office may also be contacted via telephone at (601) 359-3499.

2. Procedure for Complaints
   a. In the first level of review, a complaint shall be answered by the Bureau Director, with assistance from staff.
   b. The Bureau Director shall determine whether additional information is necessary, if so appropriate program staff will notify the agency involved, and conduct an onsite review investigating the complaint.
   c. The Bureau Director shall determine whether additional information is necessary. If there are serious violations, verified after the on-site review, then the information gathered will be forwarded to other appropriate offices or organizations.
   d. Once the investigation has been completed, the Office of Federal Programs will issue a letter stating the findings of facts. The letter stating the findings of fact shall be mailed no later than 60 calendar days from the date the Office of Federal Programs receives the complaint in writing.
   e. If areas of noncompliance are found, corrective action will be required and timelines for completion indicated. All parties will be informed of the areas of noncompliance and the required corrective actions.
   f. The Office of Federal Programs may extend the 60-day timeline, if exceptional circumstances exist. Examples of exceptional circumstances may be, but not limited to:
      i. The complexity of the issues;
      ii. The need for additional information; and/or
      iii. The unavailability of any of the necessary parties.

3. Appeals
   a. An individual may appeal an administrative determination of the Bureau Director. The individual must submit the appeal in writing to the address above. The appeal must be

postmarked no later than 25 calendar days after the date the Bureau Director's determination is made.

b. A final decision on the complaint shall be made after consulting with the State Superintendent of Education or designee.
c. The State Superintendent of Education shall provide written notification to the individual who submitted the complaint about the disposition of the complaint no later than 30 days after final action.
d. The complainant has the right to request the U.S. Secretary of Education to review the decision of the Mississippi State Department of Education. This review is at the U.S. Secretary's discretion.
e. In matters involving violations of section 9503 (participation of private school children), the complainant has the right to request the U.S. Secretary of Education to review the decision of the Mississippi State Department of Education. The U.S. Secretary will follow the procedures in section 9501(b).

Source: *Miss. Code Ann. § 37-1-3*

Rule 80.2 Title I Administrative Limit 20%. School districts shall spend no more than twenty-percent of annual Title I budgets on administrative expenses.

The purpose of this state rule is to ensure that maximum Title I funds be spent directly on students to enable them to achieve high standards. Administrative costs are defined as those costs spent on Title I Administrative activities at the district and school level. These activities include, salaries, benefits, travel, and office costs of Title I coordinators, clerks, bookkeepers, and maintenance personnel, cost of audits, and indirect cost.

Source: *Miss. Code Ann. § 37-1-3 (Adopted 3/1996)*

Rule 80.3 Program Improvement. The Mississippi State Department of Education, subject to approval of the State Board of Education, will develop and disseminate model guidelines for the evaluation of school performance. These guidelines will include a method of determining schools having exemplary performance as well as schools in need of improvement. An up-to-date copy of these guidelines shall be kept on file in the Mississippi State Department of Education.

Source: *Miss. Code Ann. § 37-1-3 (Revised 10/1997)*