NORTEC
POLICY STATEMENT
WIOA GRIEVANCE AND COMPLAINT RESOLUTION PROCEDURES

Last Updated: March 12, 2026

PURPOSE

Under WIOA Section 181(c), NoRTEC is required to establish and maintain procedures for participants and other interested parties to file grievances or complaints alleging violations of WIOA Title I requirements.

This policy contains guidance for Service Providers/AJCCs regarding the receipt, hearing, resolution, and appeals process of WIOA Title I grievance and complaints in accordance with Title 20 CFR, Sections 683.600 and 683.610. These procedures apply only to programmatic complaints alleging violations of WIOA Title I requirements in the operation/administration of WIOA programs and activities.[1]

GENERAL REQUIREMENTS

All grievances or complaints must be filed within one year of the alleged violation.

All grievances, complaints, amendments, and withdrawals must be writing, and all persons filing grievances or complaints shall be free from restraint, coercion, reprisal, and discrimination.

All participants enrolled in the WIOA program delivered through NoRTEC's Service Providers shall receive a summary[2] of the Grievance and Complaint Resolution Procedure during eligibility determination. Receipt of this summary by the participant shall be documented via the participant's signature on the WIOA application form, and a copy of this summary shall be included in the participant file.

A copy of this summary shall also be posted within each AJCC where it is available to any interested parties or members of the public.

Technical assistance shall be provided by Service Provider and/or NoRTEC staff to any individual wishing to file a grievance or complaint. Technical assistance includes, but is not limited to, providing instructions on how to file a complaint and providing copies of relevant documents such as the WIOA, federal regulations, state laws and regulations, and local procedures. This requirement does not require Service Providers and/or NoRTEC to violate any rule of confidentiality or provide legal advice.

---

[1] For information on complaints alleging discrimination under WIOA Section 188 and/or Title 29 CRF Part 38, see NoRTEC's policy on Equal Opportunity and Nondiscrimination: http://ncen.org/images/documents/policies/Equal-Opportunity-Nondiscrimination-Policy.pdf

For information on complaints alleging criminal fraud, waste, abuse or other criminal activity, see NoRTEC's policy on Incident Reporting: http://ncen.org/images/documents/policies/Incident-Reporting.pdf

[2] A copy of the summary sheet may be accessed through this link: https://ncen.org/images/documents/Program_Forms/Complaint-Resolution-Summary-Sheet.pdf

DEFINITIONS

Calendar Days – Consecutive calendar days, including weekends and holidays.

Complainant – Any participant or other interest or personally affected party alleging a noncriminal violation of the WIOA Title I requirements.

Grievance or Complaint – A written expression by a party alleging a violation of WIOA Title I or regulations promulgated under WIOA.

Hearing Officer – An impartial[3] person or group of persons that shall preside at a hearing on a grievance or complaint.

NoRTEC – Northern Rural Training and Employment Consortium, a local workforce development area, encompassing an eleven county region in Northern California (Butte, Del Norte, Lassen, Modoc, Nevada, Plumas, Shasta, Sierra, Siskiyou, Tehama and Trinity Counties).

Participant – An individual who has been determined to be eligible to participate in and who is receiving services under a program authorized under WIOA.

Respondent – The entity (e.g., Service Provider or AJCC) the complainant is filing the grievance or complaint against.

Service Provider/AJCC – A public agency, private nonprofit organization or private-for-profit entity that delivers educational, training, employment or supportive services to WIOA participants.

State Review Panel – An entity within the Employment Development Department (EDD) composed of representatives from EDD's Compliance Review Office, Legal Office, and Director's Office. The panel shall review and approve or disapprove decisions and recommendations regarding grievances or complaints.

WIOA – Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act, PL 113-128.

NORTEC GRIEVANCE AND COMPLAINT RESOLUTION PROCEDURES

A. Filing of the Grievance/Complaint

A grievance or complaint must be filed within one year of the alleged violation. The official filing date of a grievance or complaint is the date it is received by the Service Provider or NoRTEC. The filing of such a grievance or complaint shall be considered a request for a hearing and NoRTEC shall issue a written decision within 60 days of the official filing date.

If the Complainant indicates he/she wishes to file a grievance or complaint through the Service Provider or AJCC, staff shall notify NoRTEC of the grievance or complaint (regardless of whether it has been put in writing) within 72 hours. The notification may be in person, by telephone or by e-mail to NoRTEC.

[3] NoRTEC Staff, NoRTEC Service Provider/AJCC Staff, NoRTEC Workforce Development Board members, and NoRTEC Governing Board members may not function as "Hearing Officer." Per Directive WSD18-05, issued by the State of California, they are not considered "impartial."

The grievance or complaint must be in writing, signed, and dated by the Complainant.

If the Complainant filed the grievance or complaint directly with NoRTEC and the Respondent does not have a copy of the grievance or complaint, NoRTEC shall send Respondent a copy.

The following information shall be included in the grievance or complaint, but the absence of any of the requested information shall not be used as a basis for dismissing the grievance or complaint:

1. The full name, telephone number, and mailing address of the Complainant and the Respondent.
2. A clear and concise statement of the facts and dates describing the alleged violation.
3. The provision(s) of WIOA, federal regulations, grant, or other agreements under WIOA believed to have been violated.
4. Grievances or complaints against individuals, including staff or participants, shall indicate how those individuals did not comply with WIOA law or regulation.
5. The remedy sought by the Complainant.

The grievance or complaint shall be submitted to NoRTEC via mail or e-mail to:

NoRTEC
Compliance Office
11 Ilahee Lane
Chico, CA 95973
compliance@ncen.org

A grievance or complaint may be amended to correct technical deficiencies at any time up to the start of the hearing. Grievances or complaints may not, however, be amended to add new issues unless the Complainant withdraws and resubmits the grievance or complaint.

The one-year time period in which a grievance or complaint may be filed is not extended for grievances or complaints refiled with amendments.

Grievances or complaints may be withdrawn at any time prior to the issuance of the Hearing Officer's decision.

B. Informal Resolution

Upon receipt of a grievance or complaint, NoRTEC shall notify the Complainant and the Respondent of the opportunity for an informal resolution.

Respondents must make a good faith effort to resolve all grievances or complaints prior to a scheduled hearing. Failure on the part of either the Complainant or Respondent to exert a good faith effort shall not constitute a basis for dismissing a grievance or complaint, nor shall this be considered a part of the facts to be judged during the resolution process.

NoRTEC shall ensure that all grievances or complaints not resolved informally or not

withdrawn are given a hearing, regardless of the grievance or complaint's apparent merit or lack of merit.

1. Resolution Achieved – If a Complainant and Respondent are able to reach an informal resolution, a notice of resolution shall be sent to the Complainant and entered into the NoRTEC maintained complaint file. NoRTEC will request the Complainant provide a written withdrawal of the complaint within 10 days of the receipt of the notice of resolution.
2. Impasse Reached – If the informal resolution leads to an impasse between the Complainant and the Respondent, a hearing will be scheduled. If, however, the Complainant chooses not proceed to a hearing, a notice of impasse shall be sent to the Complainant and entered into the complaint file. NoRTEC will request the Complainant provide a written withdrawal of the complaint within 10 days of the receipt of the notice of impasse.

C. Local Hearing

If a local hearing is to be held, it shall be conducted within 30 days of the filing date of the grievance or complaint and the following procedure shall be followed:

1. Notice of Hearing – NoRTEC must notify the Complainant and Respondent in writing of the hearing, at least ten 10 days prior to the date of the hearing[4]. The notice shall be in writing and contain the following information:
   a. The date of the notice, name of Complainant, and the name of the party against whom the grievance or complaint is filed.
   b. The date, time, and location of the hearing.
   c. A statement of the alleged violation(s). The statement must accurately reflect the content of the grievance or complaint as submitted by the Complainant. (Clarifying notes may be added to ensure the grievance or complaint is addressed accurately.)
   d. The name, address, and telephone number of the contact person issuing the notice.
2. Conduct of Hearing

   An impartial Hearing Officer shall conduct the hearing[5]. The hearing shall be conducted in an informal manner and not be bound by strict rules of evidence. Both parties have the right to be represented at their own cost, present written and oral testimony, call and question witnesses, and request and examine records and documents relevant to the issues. The hearing must be recorded electronically or by a court reporter.

[4] The 10 day notice period may be shortened with written consent from both parties.

[5] NoRTEC Staff, NoRTEC Service Provider/AJCC Staff, NoRTEC Workforce Development Board members, and NoRTEC Governing Board members may not function as "Hearing Officer." Per Directive WSD18-05, issued by the State of California, they are not considered "impartial." An impartial Hearing Officer may be chosen from staff of legal offices or personnel departments of local municipalities or counties or other local workforce areas that will not be directly affected by, or will not implement the final resolution of, a specific grievance.

3. Decision of Hearing

   The Hearing Officer shall provide a written decision to NoRTEC. NoRTEC shall mail the written decision to both parties by first class mail no later than 60 days after the filing date of the grievance or complaint.

   The written decision shall contain the following information:

   a. The names of the parties involved.
   b. A statement of the alleged violation(s) and related issues.
   c. A statement of the facts.
   d. The Hearing Officer's decision and reasoning.
   e. A statement of the corrective action or remedies for violations, if any, to be implemented.
   f. A notice of the right of either party to request an appeal of the decision by the State Review Panel within 10 days of receipt of the decision.

D. Appeal of Local Decision or Local Decision Not Timely

1. Appeal of Local Decision – If an adverse decision is received, the Complainant has the right to file an appeal with the Employment Development Department (EDD). This appeal must be filed or postmarked within 10 days from the date on which the Complainant received an adverse decision from NoRTEC.

   Appeals must be submitted to the following address:

   Chief, Compliance Review Office, MIC 22-M
   Employment Development Department
   P.O. Box 826880
   Sacramento, CA 94280-0001

   NoRTEC will assist the Complainant with filing the appeal and the process will follow EDD's resolution procedure as outlined in Directive WSD18-05, pages 7-10[6].

   The official filing date of the grievance or complaint with EDD is the date it is received by the Compliance Review Office of EDD has 60 days from the official filing date to issue a written decision.

2. Request for EDD Review – If the Complainant does not receive a decision within 60 days of the filing date of the grievance or complaint or if there have been any incident(s) of restraint, coercion, or reprisal at the local level as a result of filing a grievance or complaint, the Complainant has the right to file a request for EDD review. This request for review must be filed or postmarked within 15 days from either of the following:

   a. The date on which a Complainant should have received a decision regarding a locally filed complaint, which is defined as five days from the date the decision was due; or
   b. The date on which an instance of restraint, coercion, or reprisal was alleged to have occurred as a result of filing the grievance or complaint.

[6] Directive WSD18-05 may be accessed at: https://www.edd.ca.gov/Jobs_and_Training/pubs/wsd18-05.pdf

A Request for EDD Review must be submitted to the following address:

Chief, Compliance Review Office, MIC 22-M
Employment Development Department
P.O. Box 826880
Sacramento, CA 94280-0001

NoRTEC will assist the Complainant with filing the appeal and the process will follow EDD's resolution procedure as outlined in Directive WSD18-05, pages 7-10[7].

The official filing date of the grievance or complaint with EDD is the date it is received by the Compliance Review Office of EDD has 60 days from the official filing date to issue a written decision.

E. Remanded Local Grievances and Complaints

Grievances or complaints filed directly with EDD related to NoRTEC programs will be remanded to NoRTEC. Reviews that reveal a trial issue, such as the Hearing Officer being an interested party, will be remanded to NoRTEC for a retrial of the grievance or complaint.

F. Federal Level Appeal Process

If the State Review Panel has issued an adverse decision regarding a grievance or complaint, or has not issued a decision within 60 days, as outlined in Directive WSD18-05, the Complainant may file an appeal with the Secretary of Labor. This appeal process applies to grievances and complaints that originated at the NoRTEC or EDD/State level.

Appeals of an adverse decision must be filed within 60 days of receipt of the adverse decision from the State Review Panel.

In cases where the State Review Panel did not issue a decision, the Complainant must file an appeal within 120 days of either of the following:

1. The date on which the Complainant filed the appeal of a local level decision or request for EDD review with the state; or
2. The date on which the Complainant filed the grievance or complaint with EDD.

All appeals to the Secretary must be sent to the Department of Labor (DOL) National Office via certified mail with return receipts requested. Copies of the appeal must simultaneously be provided to the DOL Employment and Training Administration (ETA) Regional Administrator and the Respondent.

Mailing addresses for the DOL National Office and ETA Regional Administrator are:

DOL National Office
Secretary of Labor
Attn: Assistant Secretary of ETA
U.S. Department of Labor
200 Constitution Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20210

[7] Directive WSD18-05 may be accessed at: https://www.edd.ca.gov/Jobs_and_Training/pubs/wsd18-05.pdf

ETA Regional Administrator	Office of Regional Administrator U.S. Department of Labor P.O. Box 193767 San Francisco, CA 94119-3767

Grievances or complaints filed directly with the Secretary of Labor that were not previously filed with NoRTEC and/or EDD will be remanded to NoRTEC or EDD, as appropriate.

The Secretary of Labor shall issue a final determination no later than 120 days after receiving the appeal.