



## **POLICY**

### **COMPLAINTS - STUDENTS, EMPLOYEES, PARENTS, OTHER PERSONS**

#### **I. PURPOSE**

The Volunteers of America-Minnesota Charter School Authorizing Program (VOA-MN) takes seriously all concerns or complaints by students, employees, parents or other persons. If a specific complaint procedure is provided within any other policy of the Volunteers of America-Minnesota Charter School Authorizing Program, the specific procedure shall be followed in reference to such a complaint. If a specific complaint procedure is not provided, the purpose of this policy is to provide a procedure that may be used.

#### **II. GENERAL STATEMENT OF POLICY**

A. Students, parents, employees or other persons, may report concerns or complaints to the Volunteers of America-Minnesota Charter School Authorizing Program. While written reports are encouraged, a complaint may be made orally. Any Volunteers of America-Minnesota leadership member or authorizing team member or contractor receiving a complaint shall advise the Education Division Director and Senior Program Manager of the receipt of the complaint. The Education Division Director or Senior Program Manager shall make an initial determination as to the seriousness of the complaint and whether the matter should be referred to the charter school board of directors, administration, MDE, or other authorities. A person may file a complaint at any level of the Volunteers of America-Minnesota Charter School Authorizing Program Leadership (i.e., President/CEO, Education Division Director, and Senior Program Manager). However, persons are encouraged to file a complaint at the building level of the charter school first (school director or board chair) when appropriate.

B. Depending upon the nature and seriousness of the complaint, the Education Division Director or Senior Program Manager of the Volunteers of America-Minnesota Charter School Authorizing Program shall determine the nature and scope of the investigation or follow-up procedures and, if needed, designate the person(s) responsible for the investigation or follow-up relating to the complaint. The designated investigator shall ascertain details concerning the complaint and respond promptly with a written correspondence to the Education Division Director and Senior Program Manager concerning the status or outcome of the matter.

C. The response to the complaining party shall be consistent with the rights of others pursuant to the applicable provisions of Minn. Stat. Ch. 13 (Minnesota Government Data Practices Act) or other law.

D. Anonymous complaints may not expect the same treatment contained in this policy.



## Complaint Filing Instructions

Before filing a complaint to the Volunteers of America-Minnesota Charter School Authorizing Program, we encourage you to contact the charter school director by phone, email or in writing. You may be able to resolve the concerns at the local level without filing a complaint with the Volunteers of America-Minnesota Charter School Authorizing Program. If you are not able to resolve your concerns at the local level, the following process must be followed to submit complaints to VOA-MN.

### Your written complaint must contain the following: Basic Information:

- Current date, your name, address, email address (if applicable) and a phone number to reach you if the complaint investigator needs to ask for additional information.
- Student's name and grade.
- Charter school name.

### Statement of Violation:

- State why you believe a policy, practice, or state or federal law was violated and that it occurred during the last calendar year (12 months from current date).
- Keep your focus on facts, events and specific people involved.
- Make a list of each violation you believe the school committed.
  - Include specific dates and the names of board member, school administration, teacher, or other school personnel, with corresponding dates, that you have previously dealt with regarding your complaint.

### Statement of Facts:

For each violation, list the facts to support your claim.

- Describe events with specific dates, names of individuals involved or contacted and a brief description of what happened.
- Include any additional facts to support your claim.

### Proposed Solution:

Identify proposed solutions to your complaint.

- List solutions that would be acceptable to you in resolving the complaint.
- Sign and date the complaint.

### Submission:

- Make two (2) copies -one to keep for your files and one for the VOA-MN Charter Authorizing Program.
- Send one copy electronically to the VOA-MN Charter Authorizing Program Manager Stephanie Olsen at [solsen@voamn.org](mailto:solsen@voamn.org).
- A copy of the complaint will be shared with your child's charter school consistent with the rights of others pursuant to the applicable provisions of Minn. Stat. Ch. 13 (Minnesota Government Data Practices Act) or other law.
- The school and/or the VOA-MN Charter School Authorizing Program will complete an investigation. They will consider your proposed solution and respond in writing.
- If this is a Special Education written complaint, Federal law requires that a copy of the complaint be sent to the charter school at the same time it is filed with the Minnesota Department of Education.
- If this is a Special Education complaint, mail the complaint or deliver to: Due Process Supervisor Minnesota Department of Education Division of Compliance and Assistance 1500 Highway 36 W. Roseville, MN 55113-4266 (651)582-8725 (fax).
- Submit complaints in writing to the VOA-MN Charter Authorizing Program, c/o Stephanie Olsen, Program Manager at [solsen@voamn.org](mailto:solsen@voamn.org). If you have any questions, the VOA-MN Authorizing Program can be reached at 612-270-1998.