DoD Postsecondary Education Complaint System – Case Management and Reports

The DoD Postsecondary Education Complaint System (PECS) provides authorized DoD personnel the ability to track, manage and process formal complaints that have been submitted by, or on behalf of, uniformed service members, spouses and other family members when educational institutions fail to follow the Principles of Excellence outlined in Executive Order 13607.

Authorized Users:

PECS users will be assigned a complaint system role of Level 1 (Field), Level 2 (Service Chief) or Level 3 (OSD). A user's ability to track, manage and process complaints is commensurate with their assigned Level.

- Level 1 (Field level): can take ownership of Pending, Level 1 cases that are assigned to their Service/Department. Can only view and manage cases assigned to their Department.

- Level 2 (Service Chief): can take ownership of Pending, Level 1 or Level 2 cases that are assigned to their Service/Department. Can only view and manage cases assigned to their Department.

- Level 3 users (OSD): can take ownership of any Pending case regardless of the case Level or Service/Department. Can view and manage all complaint cases.

Pending Complaint Cases

All new cases that enter PECS via the online Complaint Intake enter in a Pending status and are assigned to Level 2 (Service Chief) of the appropriate Department (Army, Navy, MyCAA, etc.). When a Pending case enters the complaint system, via the online Intake, an email notification is sent to level 2 (Service Chief) users of the appropriate Department alerting them to the pending complaint case awaiting review.

Viewing Pending Complaint Cases

Upon logging in to PECS, the user's dashboard contains a **Pending Cases** dock that displays the current total number of pending cases corresponding to each of the three levels. Users can click the count total of the desired level to view a detailed listing of the Pending cases. From the list of pending complaint cases, users can select a specific case to view its details.

Taking Ownership of Complaint Cases

Users have the ability to take ownership of complaint cases and upon doing so become the case manager. To assume the case manager status for a specific record, a user will access the complaint case details and select the Take Ownership button. When this action is taken the system will update the case status from "Pending" to "Active" and send a notification email to the complaint point of contact (POC) advising them of the change in status. Additionally, when a record's status initially changes to Active, the complaint case details will be sent to the Federal Trade Commission's (FTC) Consumer Sentinel Network system.

User manages their assigned complaint cases

After taking ownership of a complaint case, user's become the assigned case manager. Upon logging into PECS case managers can access their assigned records via their **My Cases** dock and have the ability to: (1) retain and work; (2) reassign; (3) transfer; and (4) close cases.

REASSIGNING, TRANSFERRING AND CLOSING CASES

Complaint case managers have the ability to reassign, transfer and close their assigned Active cases. When any of the aforementioned case management actions are taken the updated case information is sent to the FTC's Consumer Sentinel Network system.

Reassigning case ownership:

Reassigning case ownership is a lateral reassignment of a case to a new case manager that shares the assigner's Level and Department. To reassign a complaint case a user accesses their assigned complaint cases, views the record to be reassigned, selects the Reassign Ownership button and selects the name of the new case manager from a dropdown list of appropriate PECS users. The assigner is required to enter a note that details the reason for reassigning the complaint. Once the reassign is complete, the new case manager will receive an email notification that alerts them to the change in ownership.

Transferring case ownership:

Case managers can transfer cases to a different Level, Department and/or User. Transferring is a vertical assignment of a case to someone at a higher or lower level.

- Level 1 (field level) users can transfer Active cases they manage to Level 2 (not to a specific user – case will enter the Pending level 2 queue).

- Level 2 (Service Chief) users can transfer Active cases they own down to level 1 (Field) or up to level 3 (OSD). If transferring a case down one level they can select a specific new case manager. Level 2 users can also transfer a case to a different Department.

- Level 3 (OSD) users can transfer Active cases they manage down to level 2 (Service Chief). If transferring a case down to level 2 they can select a specific new case manager. Level 3 users can also transfer a case to another Department.

To transfer complaint cases, a case manager accesses their assigned Active complaints, views the record to be transferred, selects the Transfer Case button, and changes the Level, Department and/or a new case manager. If the case manager elects to only change the Level and/or Department, the system will update the case status to *Pending* and the record will enter the Pending Cases queue of the Level and

Department selected. When transferring a case to the same level, or to a lower level, case managers have the ability to select a new case owner as well.

When a record is transferred to a new Level and/or Department only, the system will generate a notification email to all users assigned to the appropriate Level/Department alerting them to the Pending case awaiting review.

When a record is transferred to a new case manager, the new manager will receive an email notification alerting them to the change in ownership.

Closing complaint cases

Case managers can close their assigned cases when deemed appropriate. When a complaint case's status is updated to Closed, a system generated (Do Not Reply) email will notify the Complaint POC of the change in status.

A case manager closes cases by accessing the desired record and selecting the Close Case button. When closing a case the case manager is required to select a close reason and has the option to enter a note. Case managers have the option to include their Close Note in the system generated email notification that is sent to the complaint POC. Additionally, the case manager has the option to include their contact information (phone number & email address) in the body of the notification email. The contact information will be pulled from the user's profile.

When closing a complaint case, Level 1 (field) and Level 2 (Service Chief) users must select one of the following close reasons:

- Resolved
- Duplicate

Level 3 (OSD) users must select one of the following close reasons:

- Resolved
- Duplicate
- Forwarded to FTC for action by the Dept of Justice
- Forwarded to FTC for action by the Dept of Veterans Affairs
- Forwarded to FTC for action by the Dept of Education

Escalating cases for action by the Departments of Justice, Education or Veteran Affairs

Level 3 (OSD) users have the option to escalate complaint cases to the FTC's Consumer Sentinel Network system for further action by the Department of Justice, Department of Veterans Affairs or Department of Education. Cases requiring further action are escalated to the FTC by level 3 (OSD) users closing a complaint case and selecting the applicable Close Reason. If a case is identified as requiring further action, a system generated email notification will be sent to the appropriate Department POCs (Justice, Education, and Veterans Affairs).

Level 3 (OSD) users escalate a complaint case to the FTC that requires further action by the Department of Justice, Education or Veterans Affairs by closing a case and selecting one of the following Close Reasons:

- Forwarded to FTC for action by the Dept of Justice
- Forwarded to FTC for action by the Dept of Veterans Affairs
- Forwarded to FTC for action by the Dept of Education

Reactivating Complaint cases

Previously closed records can be reactivated by Level 3 (OSD) users. When a user reactivates a complaint case they will become the assigned case manager and the system will update the status to "Active". The updated case details will be sent to the FTC's Consumer Sentinel Network and a system generated (Do Not Reply) email notification will be generated to the complainant.

Taking over case ownership from another user

Users have the opportunity to take ownership of an Active complaint case from another case manager in accordance with the following conditions:

- Level 1 (field) users can take over ownership of a Level 1, Active case that is assigned to their Service.

- Level 2 (Service Chief) users can take over ownership of a Level 1 or Level 2, Active case that is assigned to their Service.

- Level 3 (OSD) users can take over ownership of any Level 1, Level 2 or Level 3, Active case.

When a user takes over ownership of a complaint case managed by another user they become the new case manager and a Do Not Reply system generated email notification is sent to the previous case manager notifying them of the change.

Viewing complaint case details

Level 3 (OSD) users can *view* all complaint cases, however, Level 1 (field) and Level 2 (Service Chief) can only view cases assigned to their Department.

Complaint record details include all the information that was entered into the online Complaint Intake, uploaded via XML file or entered by case managers. Case managers can update information as needed (for cases in an Active status). A complaint case contains three tabs (Complaint, Notes & Log).

A record's **Complaint** tab is separated into four sections (Contact Information, Complainant Information, Complaint Information & Education Information:

The **Contact Information** section includes the following fields: I am filing on behalf of myself, I am filing on behalf of someone else, Rank/Salutation, First Name, Last Name, Street 1, Street 2, City, State, Zip, Country, Telephone, and Email.

The **Complainant Information** section includes the following fields when complainants file on behalf of themselves and select Service Members as their Service Affiliation: Service affiliation, Service Status, Branch, Rank, age and Education Benefits Currently Using when complainants file on behalf of themselves and are a service member.

- The Complainant Information section includes the following fields when a complaint is filed on behalf of someone else: Complainant's Service Affiliation, Complainant's Service Status, Complainant's Branch, Complainant's Rank, Age and Education Benefits Currently Using.

- The Complainant Information section includes the following fields when Spouse or Family Member is selected as the Service Affiliation: Service Affiliation, Service Status, is Complainant MyCAA, Branch, Rank, Age and Education Benefits Currently Using.

- The Complainant Information section includes the following fields when a complaint is filed on behalf of someone else and Spouse or Family Member is selected as the Service Affiliation: Complainant's Service Affiliation, Is the complainant a MyCAA Student, Complainant's Sponsor's Service Status, Complainant's Sponsor's Branch, Complainant's Sponsor's Rank, Age and Education Benefits Currently Using.

The **Complaint Information** section includes the following fields: Describe your issue, Describe what happened so that we can better understand the issue and what do you think would be a fair resolution to your issue.

The **Education Information** section includes the following fields: School Name, Street 1, Street 2, City, State, Zip, Country, level of Study, Out-of-Pocket Tuition paid during the last academic year, Government Tuition Credit received during last academic year, Education Center Name, Street 1, Street 2, City, State, Zip, and Country.

Case managers are permitted to update any of the aforementioned fields, listed in the *Viewing Complaint Case Details* section of this document, when a case is in an Active status only. Case details cannot be updated while a case is in a Pending or Closed status. When an update is made to a record's details the updated information will be sent to the FTC's Consumer Sentinel Network system.

Case Notes

A case's Notes tab lists all entries recorded into a record by complaint system users. Users are able to view and enter notes into a record regardless of a case's status (Pending, Active or Closed). A user is restricted to editing notes that they authored. Notes entered by other users are read-only.

Additionally, a user has the option to email case notes, limited to notes they entered, to the complainant. If the user desires, they can opt to include their contact information (phone number & email address) into the body of the system generated email. The contact information is pulled from their user profile.

Case Log

A record's Case Log tab details all updates made to the record. The case log details updates to the following: Case Status, Case Level, Department, Case Manager, Case Manager assigned date/time, Case Closed Reason, Case Closed date/time, Updated by and Updated date/time.

Uploading cases to the complaint system via XML file:

Level 1 (Field), Level 2 (Service Chief) or Level 3 (OSD) users can upload cases to the DoD Postsecondary Education Complaint System via XML file. Only cases in a Pending or Closed, Level 2 status can be uploaded to PECS. When a case enters as Pending, Level 2, a (Do Not Reply) system generated email will be sent to all Level 2 (Service Chief) users of the appropriate Department notifying them of the new case that is available for review. All records that are created via XML file upload will be sent to the FTC's Consumer Sentinel Network system upon entry into PECS.

REPORTS

Users have the option to run complaint system related reports. All users can run reports by establishing query parameters and selecting the desired report title. Reports can be queried by fiscal year, specific date range or by Rank Group. Level 3 (OSD) users can also query by Service. Report results can also be exported to an MS Excel spreadsheet by clicking an export to Excel icon. The following complaint system reports can be run by all users:

- **Number of Complaint Cases by School**

  Report provides a list of schools and the total number of complaint cases filed against them. Report results include all complaint cases with a submitted date between the selected date ranges.

- **Complaint Cases by Education Benefit**

  Report provides the total number of complaint cases by Education Benefit for complaints submitted between the selected date range.

- **Complaint Cases by Issue**

  Report provides the total number of complaint cases by Issue for complaints submitted between the selected date range.

- **Complaint Cases by Education Benefit and Issue**

  Report provides the total number of complaint cases by Education Benefit and Issue for complaints submitted between the selected date range.

- **Average Complaint Case Processing Time**

  Report lists all Closed complaint cases by service and provides the length of time it took for each case to progress from Pending to Closed for complaints closed between the selected date range. Report excludes uploaded cases from external systems.

- **Complaint Cases Forwarded to OSD and FTC**

  Report provides the number of complaint cases forwarded to OSD and FTC for complaints closed between the selected date range.

- **Complaint Cases by Complainant Service, Pay Grade and Age**

  Report provides a total number of complaint cases broken out by service, pay grade and age group. Report results include complaints submitted between the selected date range.

- **Complaint Cases by Level and Status**

  Report provides the total number of complaint cases by level and status (Active, Pending, Closed) for complaints submitted between the selected date ranges.