

Lewis & Clark Library System Member Grievance Policy

I. Purpose

The primary purpose of the Lewis & Clark Library System Membership Grievance policy is to provide a formal framework for the member libraries to bring about satisfactory resolution of complaints. This grievance procedure may also be used to appeal System Board decisions regarding membership applications and suspension of members.

II. Philosophy

System members who have complaints concerning system services should contact appropriate LCLS staff and the Executive Director. Most service related complaints can be resolved by the LCLS Executive Director. Members can consult the Plan of Cooperative Service for a description of the mission, goals, and objectives of the System.

III. Grounds for Grievances

Service policies are written by LAC and are subject to review from member libraries before adoption by LCLS= Board of Directors. Members seeking to change those policies should address their concerns to the Librarians= Advisory Council or the LCLS Board.

Claims of violation, misapplication or misinterpretation of adopted operational plans and policies are grounds for grievances. Any Board action, or the application or interpretation of that action, may be grieved pursuant to this procedure. Decisions regarding membership applications and suspensions are also covered by this procedure.

IV. Who can file an official complaint?

Formal complaints may be filed only by the grievant=s governing body, or by an official specifically authorized to do so on behalf of the governing body.

V. Grievance Procedure

1. The governing body of the member library (GBML) must submit the grievance in writing to the Executive Director via registered mail.

2. Within ten (10) working days of receipt of the grievance, the Executive Director must respond in writing to the GBML using the Membership Grievance Policy Appeal Form. In this communication, the Executive Director will either agree to comply with the member=s wishes, will explain why LCLS cannot comply with those wishes, or will suggest a compromise or alternative solution.
3. If the GBML is not satisfied with the Executive Director=s decision, the GBML may, within ten (10) working days of the Executive Director=s reply, file an appeal in writing with the LCLS Board. The appeal must be sent to the Board President. The appeal must include the name of the authorized representative of the GBML as provided in Section IV.
4. The Executive Director, within five (5) working days of receipt of the copy of the appeal to the Board, will provide the Board President and the GBML with the name of the Director=s authorized representative from LCLS.
5. The Hearing Committee will consist of three (3) members of the System=s Board of Directors designated by the Board President. The committee will choose a Chairman within five (5) working days. If the committee cannot agree on a Chairman, the Board President will appoint a Chairman.
6. Within ten (10) working days of appointment of the Chair, the Chair will schedule a hearing to be held within twenty (20) days of the appointment. Notice of the time and place of the hearing will be provided in writing to the GBML and to the Executive Director. Any supporting documentation must be submitted in triplicate to the Chair of the Hearing Committee at least five (5) working days before the hearing date. The committee is encouraged to hear any evidence or verbal statements provided by the grieving party. If the committee chooses not to listen to any evidence or statements, a detailed explanation must be included in the written summary that is submitted to the LCLS Board. The hearing will be recorded on audio tape.

7. Within ten (10) working days after the hearing, the Hearing Committee will submit the written summary of the hearing, any supporting documentation, and its recommendation for action. The Board may adopt, reject or modify any recommendation at its discretion. All decisions of the Board on recommendations of the Hearing Committee and all actions taken regarding the grievance and appeal are final (see section VII below). Notice of the Board's final action will be provided to the GBML and Executive Director within ten (10) working days of the Board Meeting.
8. At any time after the hearing either the GBML or the Executive Director of LCLS may hire a transcriptionist to prepare a transcript of the hearing. The party requesting the transcript is entirely responsible for costs associated with preparing it.

VI. Time Limits

Deadlines specified in this procedure may be extended by the agreement of the GBML and the Executive Director. However, if no extension is obtained, the failure of a GBML to proceed to the next step within the time limit set forth will be deemed a waiver of any further appeal concerning the particular grievance and decision. If the Executive Director does not issue a written decision within the proper time, the GBML is authorized to proceed to the next step.

VII. Further Appeal Procedure

Board actions that may result in membership suspension or denial of a membership application may be appealed to the State Librarian after exhausting the remedies set forth above. For further appeal procedures, consult the Illinois Administrative Code or the Illinois State Library.

Approved by LCLS Board of Directors 3/16/99

Membership Grievance Policy Appeal Form

This form is to be completed by a member library when no satisfactory resolution to a complaint can be reached and the library is bringing the grievance to the LCLS Board of Directors.

1. Today's date
2. Name of Library
3. Name of the person authorized by the library GBML (Governing body of member library) to represent the library in this matter
4. a. Briefly describe the problem.

b. What steps have been taken to try to resolve the problem.

c. Has the Conflict Resolution Program been used?
5. Attach a copy of the written grievance submitted to the Executive Director. On what date was this document sent to the Executive Director?
6. Attach a copy of the response from the Executive Director. What date was the response received? Was the response received within ten (10) working days of the receipt of the grievance?
7. To appeal the decision of the Executive Director the grieving library must submit a written explanation of why the Executive Director's reply is not satisfactory. Attach that explanation to this form.

8. Does the library wish to have a transcript of the hearing?

Is the library willing to absorb any costs associated with preparing this transcript?

THIS SECTION IS TO BE COMPLETED BY LCLS BOARD PRESIDENT ONLY.

1. Has the Chairman of the Hearing Committee sent notice of the hearing to the GBML? Indicate date sent and attach a copy of the notice.
2. Did the library submit supporting documentation in triplicate to the Chairperson of the Hearing Committee five (5) working days in advance of the hearing date? List the documents received and the number of pages contained in each document.
3. What recommendation was made by the Hearing Committee to the LCLS Board of Directors?