Informal Resolution FAQ

This document is to be read in conjunction with the Office of Institutional Equity (OIE) Process Standards, which outlines Informal Resolution processes. Please see the OIE Process Standards for additional information about the investigative resolution process, including Informal Resolutions. This document provides answers to frequently asked questions. Should you need additional information, please contact Allan Williams, Director of Resolutions in the Office of Institutional Equity at Williams.3839@osu.edu.

1. Does Informal Resolution mean my case is being taken less seriously?
   • No, Informal Resolution is a facilitated negotiation for parties to agree upon an outcome for a complaint. Informal Resolution is meant to be an alternative resolution option to an investigative and/or hearing process.

2. Why is it called Informal Resolution?
   • Informal Resolution is a term used in the 2020 Title IX regulations. The Ohio State University is using this term to encompass options that are more adaptable and able to address complaints without a hearing.

3. What is the timeline of Informal Resolution?
   • The goal of Informal Resolutions is to sign a Resolutions Agreement 90 business days or less from receipt of request by both parties. However, the process may be extended for good cause as determined by the Resolutions Officer.
   • Steps of the Informal Resolution process
     i. Both parties request Informal Resolution.
     ii. OIE reviews for appropriateness of request as provided in the OIE Process Standards.
     iii. Resolutions Officer meets with parties individually to facilitate negotiation of terms. There will be no direct communication between parties. If an agreed outcome cannot be reached the Resolutions Officer will refer the Complaint back to investigations.
     iv. Parties sign a Resolution Agreement to document all terms.
     v. OIE reviews appropriateness and if additional terms are required.

4. Is this process private?
   • Information from an Informal Resolution will not be used in any subsequent hearings.
   • All Informal Resolution documentation will be maintained by OIE.

5. Why do I have to file a Complaint to begin Informal Resolution?
   • Complaints allow OIE to determine if the behavior is within the office’s scope and whether Informal Resolution or another university process would be most appropriate to address the alleged behavior.

6. What if I want to attempt Informal Resolution and the other party doesn’t?
   • Informal Resolution is a voluntary process and both parties must agree to participate for it to proceed.

7. What if the other party wants to exit Informal Resolution?
   • Either party can exit Informal Resolution at any time prior to finalization of an Informal Resolution agreement.

8. Do I have to accept responsibility in Informal Resolution?
   • Accepting Responsibility is a form of Informal Resolution, but not required to participate.

9. What will happen if terms of an agreement are not followed?
   • The Resolution Agreement will contain agreed on sanctions which will go into effect if terms are not completed.