

Approved by Faculty Senate on March 25, 2026

Postdoctoral Scholar / Postdoctoral Fellow Grievance Procedure

It is the responsibility of the [Office of Faculty Advancement and Postdoctoral Affairs](#) within the [Office of the Provost](#) to ensure that all trainees mentored through postdoctoral scholar or postdoctoral fellow appointments (“Postdocs”) at Case Western Reserve University have adequate access to faculty and administrative consideration of their grievances concerning traineeship issues. A three-step procedure has been established for Postdocs to present complaints about traineeship actions they feel are unfair, contrary to the individual development plan between them and their mentor or Principal Investigator, or in violation of the university’s [Postdoctoral Affairs Policies and Procedures](#).

1. Postdocs with complaints should first discuss their grievances with the person against whom the complaint is directed.
2. In those instances in which this discussion does not resolve a grievance to the Postdocs’s satisfaction, a complaint should be presented in writing to the department chairperson. If the complaint is against the department chair and is not resolved with this individual, the complaint should be presented to the dean of the school/college.
3. In the event that a decision still appears unfair to the Postdoc or contrary to their individual development plan, the Postdoc may bring the matter to the attention of the Office of Postdoctoral Affairs. The Office of Postdoctoral Affairs may ask the Postdoc to put the complaint in writing. They will then discuss the case with the Postdoc and the department chair to evaluate the particulars and to make a ruling on it. As the situation warrants, they may appoint a Grievance Committee to recommend what action should be taken. In this event, the Committee will be composed of two faculty members selected from the [Committee on Graduate Studies](#) of the [Faculty Senate](#) and two Postdocs.

The Provost or Provost’s designee has the responsibility for the final decision, and the ruling from the Provost’s Office will be considered final and binding on the persons involved in the grievance.

It should be understood that this grievance procedure relates solely to Postdoc complaints concerning traineeship actions they feel are unfair, contrary to the individual development plan between them and their mentor or Principal Investigator, or in violation of the university’s [Postdoctoral Affairs Policies and Procedures](#). Other issues including discrimination or harassment based on membership in a protected class, sexual

misconduct, research misconduct, or alleged violations of state or federal law are covered through different policies.