

## **Red Lake Nation Tribe**

### **Student Complaint Process for Red Lake Nation College Students**

#### **Introduction**

In order for institutions of higher education to participate in the federal student aid programs authorized by Title IV of the Higher Education Act of 1965, an institution must be legally authorized to provide post-secondary educational programs within the state in which it is located.

By rule promulgated by the U .S. Department of Education, part of this "state authorization" requirement is that the state must have "a process to review and appropriately act on complaints concerning the institution including enforcing applicable State laws ...." 34 C.F.R. § 600.9(a) ( 1).

Tribal institutions must meet provisions under §600.9(a)(1 ) if authorized by name to offer educational programs beyond secondary education by an Indian tribe, provided that the institution is located on tribal lands and the tribal government has a process to review and appropriately act on complaints about an institution and enforces tribal requirements or laws.

For its part, the institution must "provide students or prospective students with contact information for filing complaints with its accreditor and with its State approval or licensing entity and any other relevant State official or agency that would appropriately handle the student's complaint." Id. at § 668.43(b).

These complaints or grievances can be related to academic problems, mistreatment by another, wrongful assessment of fees, record errors, or discrimination of any kind. In all instances that follow, the term "days" does not include Saturdays, Sundays, holidays or breaks in the academic year. No retaliation of any kind shall be taken against a student for participation in the filing of a Tribal complaint or grievance. Confidentiality is maintained throughout this Tribal complaint process.

#### **Red Lake Tribal Student Complaint Procedures for RLNC:**

This Red Lake Tribal Student Complaint process is an alternative Tribal College complaint procedure available to all students that is outside of the normal Tribal College complaint and grievance system.

1. If you believe you are not being issued a fair outcome with regard to academic programs or practices of the Tribal College, students may choose to approach our Tribal Ombudsman Office, which will be located within the Red Lake Tribal Human Resources Department.
2. The Tribal Ombudsman Office will deal with any type of complaints. The Tribal Council cannot limit the types of complaints a student can file with the Tribal Council. However, the Tribal Council can limit the types of relief it would provide so long as it determined the school had responded adequately to the student's complaint.
3. The Tribal Ombudsman will carefully only address issues that are legitimate concerns over a student's academic affairs, or other matters of the college that are not being addressed by the Tribal College.
4. Complete, signed and submit these attached forms to the Tribal Ombudsman Office that will be located in the Human Resources Office of the Tribe:

- \* RLNC Student Complaint
- \* Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA).

These forms must be completed and signed by the student in order to process the complaint/grievance. These completed RLNC forms will be initiated from the Tribal Ombudsman Office and will allow the Tribal College to send the student information and complaint/grievance information to the Tribal Ombudsman office for further consideration.

5. The forms and general information on the Tribal Complaint process, can be obtained from these RLNC offices, on RLNC's Website and from the following Tribal offices and locations
  - \* Tribal Ombudsman office located in the Human Resources Director office
  - \* Your rlnc.education portal
  - \* RLNC's website under Student - Student Forms
  - \* Student Support Services Department
  - \* Retention Counselors and Recruitment Counselors
  - \* Admissions/Registrar employees
  - \* Financial Aid Coordinator
  - \* VP of Academic Affairs office
6. Return the completed RLNC forms to the Tribal Ombudsman office so the Tribe can request this information from the Tribal College to start the review of the complaint/grievance process.
7. Within seven (7) days of filing your complaint, you will receive a follow-up call or email from the Tribal Ombudsman office to address your concerns and/or to advise you on your next steps. The receipt of this letter from the Tribal Ombudsman will be the official start date of the complaint process.
8. After this Tribal Complaint process has been fully reviewed, investigated and completed by the Tribal Ombudsman, the Tribe will issue a final determination on the student's complaint/grievance within 14 days of the start of the complaint process.
9. The results and decision of the Tribal Ombudsman from this Tribal Complaint will be final.

### **Red Lake Tribal Ombudsman**

If a RLNC student believes they have an injustice, there is an alternative appeal option outside of the RLNC governing process and appeal system.

Appeals to the Red Lake Tribal Ombudsman is an appeal outside of the entire scope of the RLNC. The Red Lake Tribal Ombudsman Office will be a special office established to offer an alternative appeal for students for academic concerns, or practices of the RLNC. The Tribal Ombudsman Office personnel will be identified by the Tribe as a certified mediator, or other person with professional human resource training, or impartiality. The original Red Lake Tribal Ombudsman will be the Red Lake Nation Human Resources Director, starting on October 31, 2017. Until further notice, the person in this Red Lake Nation Human Resources Director position will serve as the Red Lake Tribal Ombudsman for outside RLNC appeals or complaints regarding RLNC academics or matters of the RLNC.

### **Use of Outside Remedies**

If anytime, prior to filing a formal complaint, or while such complaint proceedings are in progress as provided in the general policy, a grievant seeks resolution of his/her grievance in any other forum, be it administrative, social media, or Tribal judicial, the college shall have the right, in its sole discretion, to terminate any future consideration of the complaint and will notify the complainant in writing.



# RED LAKE NATION COLLEGE

*Tribal Ombudsman has student fill this out so information can be provided to the tribe.*

## **FERPA (Federal Educational Rights and Privacy Act)**

### **CONSENT TO RELEASE STUDENT INFORMATION**

I, \_\_\_\_\_, the undersigned, hereby authorize \_\_\_\_\_  
(Print Full Name) (Institution)  
(hereby referred to as "the institution") and its authorized representatives consent to the institution's release of any of my educational records, including personally identifiable information that the institution determines is relevant and necessary to provide to the Tribal Ombudsman Person in response to my complaint/grievance. I also authorize representatives of the institution to discuss the details of my complaint with the Tribal Ombudsman Person.

Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

