



EDUCATION AND CERTIFICATION DISPUTE POLICY

Effective Date
August 1, 2020

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to establish the International Association of Canine Professionals (IACP) Education and Certification (EC) procedures on receiving and processing disputed grades or Continuing Education Units (CEU). The IACP is committed to maintaining an environment that encourages collaboration, trust, cooperation, and communications, where all behaviors are consistent with the IACP ethical framework. It is recognized, however, that on occasions complaints or concerns may occur and that a grievances process is required to resolve those issues.

This policy aims to ensure that disputes are handled and resolved in an appropriate, fair, transparent, and timely manner. This process may not be used to appeal a decision rendered by the IACP in accordance with the bylaws.

Who this order affects

This order applies to IACP members, the Director of Education and Certification (DOEC) or his/her designee, IACP staff, IACP volunteers, IACP vendors, and IACP sponsors.

This Order Cancels

This Order does not cancel or supersede any other orders.

Policy

IACP encourages anyone with a complaint or concern regarding certification exams or Continuing Education Units (CEU's) to seek resolution. The initial resolution should be attempted between the IACP representative and the person disputing the unfavorable grade or CEU notification from IACP Education and Certification if you are comfortable doing so. Should the issue be resolved and mutually agreed upon, then that will be the end of the matter.

If the affected person and IACP representative are unable to amicably resolve the issue, then IACP encourages all persons to resolve these complaints or concerns through the process outlined in this EC Dispute Policy and its procedures.

To initiate a dispute, fill out and send the **Education and Certification (EC) Dispute Form (Attachment-1)** by mail, fax, telephone, or online as outlined below.

- Preferred method is by E-mail, send form to:
 - certification@canineprofessionals.com
 - Title the subject line: **EC Dispute Form**

- If by mail, send form to:
 - IACP Education and Certification
ATTN: EC Dispute Form
P.O. Box 928
Lampasas, TX 76550

- If by fax, submit the completed form to:
 - (884) 361-7981
 - FAX header: **EC Dispute Form**

- If by telephone, call the main office to request a copy mailed to you.
 - (512) 564-1011

- If by internet, a copy of the form is on the IACP Website.

IACP's EC Policy and its procedures addresses the linguistic and cultural needs of its member population, as well as the needs of members with disabilities. The system ensures all members have access to and can fully participate in the dispute process by, collaboration and coordination in seeking assistance for those with limited English proficiency, or with a visual or other communicative impairment. These efforts shall include, but are not limited to, translations of dispute procedures, forms, and plan responses to disputes, as well as access to interpreters, telephone relay systems, and other devices that aid disabled individuals to communicate.

Confidentiality

The EC Dispute process is limited to the DOEC, the assigned IACP Fact finder, and all parties directly involved in the dispute. IACP members requesting release of information or documentation, other than those specifically named in an actual dispute process, will make that request in writing. The letter must be directed to the DOEC and state the reason for requesting the release of sensitive and confidential information.

No Retaliation Policy

Disputes filed under the EC Dispute Policy shall not affect the member's status in any way. IACP will enforce a strict **no-tolerance policy** against discrimination based upon the filing of any disputes under this EC Dispute Policy.

If a member alleges he or she has been retaliated against for exercising rights under this policy, or for participating in a dispute as a witness or representative on behalf of the member initiating a dispute, a formal grievance should be initiated in accordance to the IACP Grievance Policy. The Education and Certification considers such acts of discrimination or retaliation by another IACP member, staff, volunteer, vendors, or sponsors unacceptable conduct and a violation of the IACP Code of Ethics.

Documentation

IACP will record all disputes expressed either orally and/or in writing on the day that it is received on the **IACP Education and Certification Dispute Log (Attachment-2)**. The written record shall include: the date the dispute was received; the name of the IACP member who initiated the dispute, the assigned IACP Fact Finder, and date of Final Determination Letter.

When applicable, the records shall contain all documents, evidence, and other relevant information upon which IACP relied in reaching its decision. IACP will retain copies of disputes, responses, supporting documents, and resolutions for three (3) years, then removed from main files and archived for five (5) years.

IACP Education and Certification Dispute Flow Chart (Attachment-4)

Certification Exam Dispute

The Education and Certification recognizes that at times, applicants may believe that their final grade has been unfairly assigned and want to dispute the grade.

Grade disputes may only be filed when an applicant contends that his/her final grade in a certification exam is arbitrary or capricious, assigned with prejudice, or assigned in error.

- *“Error”* implies that a grade was
 - miscalculated or
 - there was an error in scoring a standardized test.
- *“Arbitrary or capricious”* and *“with prejudice”* implies that:

- The applicant has been assigned a grade on the basis of something other than his/her exam response content.
- The applicant's grade was based on nonacademic criteria, which can include politics, race, religion, gender, and/or national origin; or
- Standards used in the determination of the applicant's grades are not consistent with standards applied comparably to other applicants in the certification test; or
- The grade is based upon standards that are significant, unannounced or unreasonable departures from those documented and formally approved in the certification exam guidelines, instructions, and descriptions.

A grade dispute must be for legitimate disagreement and is not intended for use because a student disagrees about an IACP Evaluators judgement about the quality of the applicant's work. Examples of disagreements could include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Applicant was not informed of the basis for grade calculation prior to exam submission.
- The applicant's grade was not calculated in accordance with the stated procedures in the exam guidelines.
- There was a significant and unwarranted deviation from grading procedures based on whim or impulse.
- There was an error in the computation of the grade that was not corrected.

CEU Dispute

The Education and Certification recognizes that at times, CEU applicants or providers may believe that an event has been unfairly non-approved, declined, rejected, or removed from the IACP approval list.

CEU disputes may only be filed when the affected person contends that IACP's determination of not accepting the event is arbitrary or capricious, evaluated with prejudice, or assigned in error.

- *"Error"* implies that the event was
 - miscalculated or
 - there was an error in processing the event criteria.
- *"Arbitrary or capricious"* and *"with prejudice"* implies that:

- The event viewed with basis of something other than the event contents.
- The event non-acceptance was based on non-dog training standards criteria, which can include politics, race, religion, gender, and/or national origin; or
- Standards used in the determination of the events content selection such as preferred dog training methods over other methods; or
- The event determination was based upon standards that are significant, unannounced or unreasonable departures from those documented and formally approved in the CEU policy, instructions, and descriptions.

An event dispute must be for legitimate disagreement and is not intended for use because an applicant or provider disagrees about the IACP staff's judgement about the quality of the event. Examples of disagreements could include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Applicant was not informed of the basis for grade calculation prior to exam submission.
- The applicant's grade was not calculated in accordance with the stated procedures in the exam guidelines.
- There was a significant and unwarranted deviation from grading procedures based on whim or impulse.
- There was an error in the computation of the grade that was not corrected.

Initiating a Dispute

Members may file a dispute under this EC Dispute Policy for up to 45 calendar days following any incident or action which gives rise to the member's dissatisfaction. The member must file using the **EC Dispute Form (Attachment-1)**. The narrative section of the EC Dispute Form must include:

- A concise statement of the facts surrounding the disputed certification exam grade or CUE, and if applicable, any known policy, rule, or legal violation.
- A concise statement of the efforts made to resolve the issue.
- A description of the desired remedy or outcome.

Upon EC Dispute Form submission, the dissatisfied IACP member will be referred to as petitioner.

Dispute Acknowledgement

The petitioner shall receive a written acknowledgement that their EC Dispute Form has been received by IACP within five (5) calendar days from the date that IACP received the EC Dispute Form. The written acknowledgement will be a **Receipt of Education and Certification (EC) Dispute Form (Attachment-3)**.

Dispute Fact Finding Inquiry

The DOEC will select an IACP Fact Finder who will be assigned to the petitioner's dispute. The IACP Fact Finder will have 30 calendar days to complete an independent fact-finding inquiry from all parties involved in the dispute. Please refer to the

The IACP Fact Finder will have the discretion to request additional information or supporting documentation prior to the conclusion of the fact-finding. If more than 30 calendar days are needed for the fact-finding inquiry, the IACP Fact Finder will notify the DOEC. If warranted, the DOEC may grant an extension and notify the petitioner of the extension.

Dispute Final Determination

Upon completion of the factfinding inquiry, the IACP Fact Finder will submit to the DOEC a detailed written report with supporting documentation. The DOEC must make a final determination based on a preponderance of evidence provided by the initial EC Dispute Form, supporting documentation, and fact-finding report. The DOEC will use the **Education and Certification Dispute Final Determination letter (Attachment-5)** to notify the petitioner within 14 calendar days of receipt of the fact-finding report.

Appealing a Dispute Final Determination

If you feel the need to appeal part or all the final determination, you may initiate a formal grievance in accordance to the IACP Grievance Policy within 10 business days from receipt of the EC Dispute Final Determination letter.



Julie Hart, ECC Director Oversight
(first last name)
IACP Director (department or title)

7/24/20
Date



Education and Certification Dispute Form

Name		Member Number	
Address		Telephone:	
City/State/Zip		E-mail	
Today's Date:		Occurrence date of disputed action:	

Select only one type of dispute per EC Dispute Form:

Certification Exam Final Grade CEU Course Rejection

Provide a concise statement of the facts surrounding the disputed certification exam grade or CUE rejection, and if applicable, any known policy, rule, or legal violation. Include a concise statement of the efforts made to resolve the issue and a description of the desired remedy or outcome. Please include supporting documentation.

(original 8/1/2020)

Attachment-1a

Use additional sheets for continuation if needed and affix to the end of this document.

FOR EDUCATION AND CERTIFICATION OFFICE USE ONLY

	Validated by	Date
Education and Certification Dispute Form received at IACP office		
Name of Assigned Fact Finder		
Fact finding start and end dates		
Fact finding package sent to fact finder		
Receipt EC Dispute Form Letter sent to petitioner		
Fact Finder's report received at IACP office		
Education and Certification Final Determination Letter sent to petitioner		

(original 8/1/2020)

Attachment-1b



DATE: (date)

FROM: (name)
IACP Education and Certification, Director - Oversight

TO: (applicant name and IACP member number)

SUBJECT: Receipt of Education and Certification (EC) Dispute Form

This is an acknowledgement of receipt of your EC Dispute Form to IACP Education and Certification dated (insert date) in which you are initiating a (CEU or Grade) dispute that allegedly occurred on (insert date of occurrence).

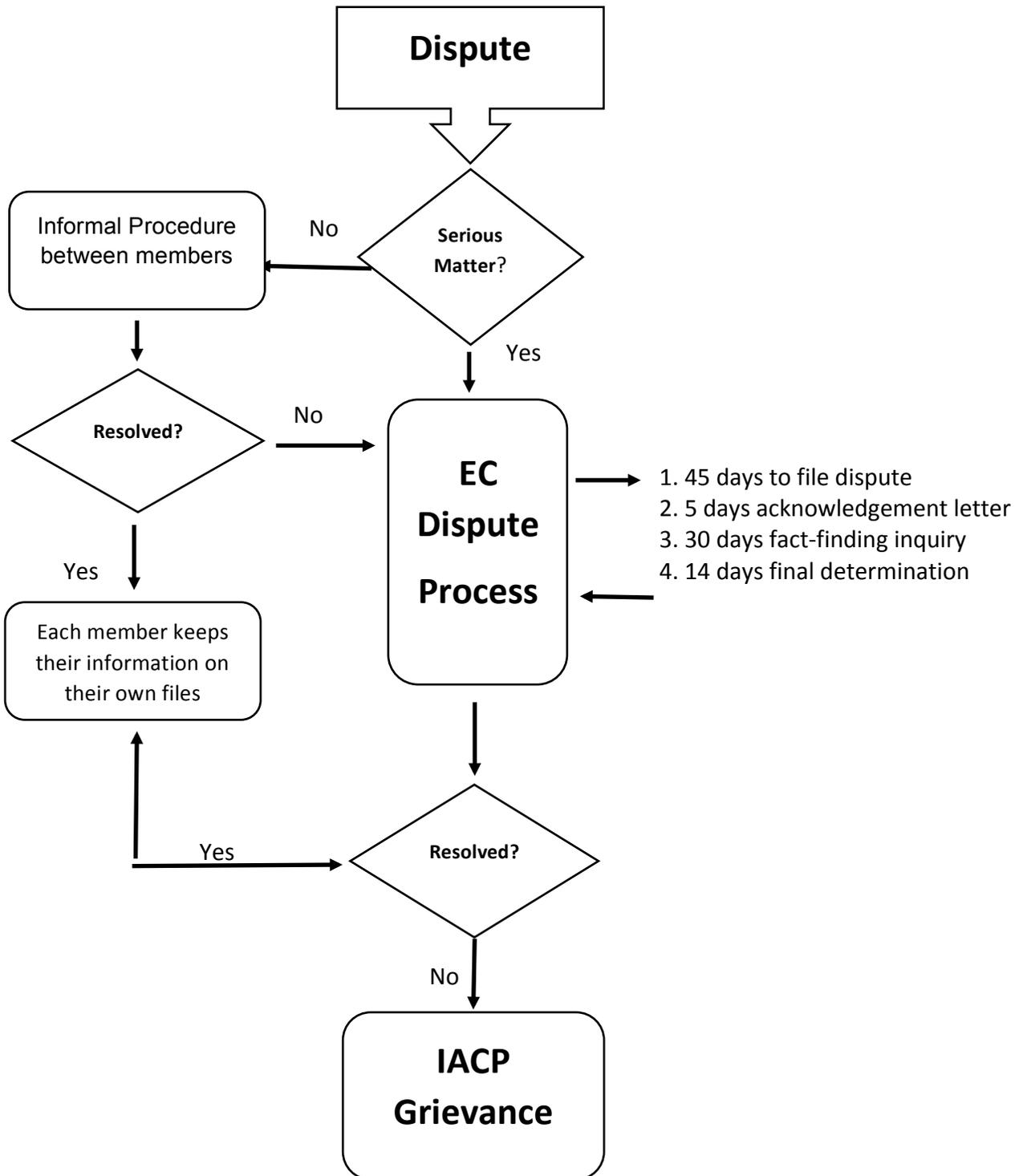
(insert name), has been assigned as the IACP Fact Finder for your dispute. The IACP Fact Finder will have 30 calendar days to complete a fact-finding inquiry. If you have not heard from the IACP Fact Finder within 14 calendar days of the date of this letter, notify the IACP main office.

If you have any questions, please direct them to certification@canineprofessionas.com

(original 8/1/2020)

Attachment-3

Education and Certification Dispute Flow Chart



(original 8/1/2020)

Attachment-4



DATE: (date)

FROM: (name)
Education and Certification, Director - Oversight

TO: (applicant name and IACP member number, if applicable)

SUBJECT: Education and Certification Dispute Final Determination

The IACP Fact Finder has completed the fact-finding inquiry to the (CEU or Grade) dispute submitted on (date of original EC Dispute date on the EC Dispute Form).

() The fact-finding inquiry supports your claim of (box checked on EC Dispute Form).

As a result, IACP will
*** describe the resolution and effective date ***

() The fact-finding inquiry partially supports your claim of (box checked on EC Dispute Form).

As a result, IACP will
*** describe which part of the resolution is in the member's favor and effective date ***

The fact-finding inquiry did not support the part of your claim of
*** specify which parts were not supported ***

() We regret to inform you that the fact-finding inquiry did not support your claim of (insert actual title of box checked on EC Dispute Form).

If you feel the need to appeal part or all of this EC Dispute Final Determination, you may initiate a Grievance in accordance to the IACP Grievance Policy within 10 business days from receipt of this letter.

Attachment: Copy of Fact-Finding Inquiry
IACP Grievance Policy

(original 8/1/2020)

Attachment-5