**HeartCert Dispute Resolution Policy:**

HeartCert strives for excellence and will ensure that all students and instructors have the opportunity to express any concerns they may have and ensure they are handled in a quick, unbiased and efficient manner consistent with AHA expectations/rules. Students are automatically E-mailed an evaluation for all classes (independent training sites/instructors are required to supply evaluations and report their results). Included with that correspondence is information on how to express grievances, questions or concerns to the TC, or the AHA via E-mail or website form. HeartCert will handle all complaints at the lowest level possible but may seek assistance from the AHA as outlined below. If an instructor has an issue with the TC or another instructor, the TCC shall be made aware to investigate. If the TC has an issue with an instructor, the instructor shall be notified and that item addressed as applicable in the quality assurance plan. Timelines, guidelines and expectations are expressed in more detail below. All Instructors and Training Sites under HeartCert will be notified and adhere to this policy. The TCC will use discretion as to how to best handle the situation and document accordingly. Upholding the values and standards of the AHA will be given top priority. The TC will not burden an instructor or student with any further fees for additional training, remediation etc. once a complaint is received. Below are statements and policies outlining procedures and a general understanding of the expectation the AHA has for TC’s to handle disputes. These statements have been modeled off of information from other public TC policies and information found in the PAM and instructornetwork:

All students and affiliates of HeartCert will understand that all disputes, complaints, or allegations within the ECC Training Network are to be managed in a clear, respectful, impartial, and organized fashion that is consistent with the ethics, values, policies, and procedures of the AHA. It is optimal that such disputes, complaints, or allegations be resolved at the lowest level of the network. In particular, when a member of the ECC leadership (RF, National Faculty, Regional ECC Committee member, PROAD member) or staff does not comply with the position description requirements, breaches the AHA or ECC Conflict of Interest Standards, or fails to meet the standards of the ECC Leadership Code of Conduct, disciplinary action may be warranted. It is essential that, before such disciplinary action is taken, the proper procedure is followed so that:

1. A fair and confidential investigation has been conducted by the committee or entity to which the individual reports, as indicated in the position description. Generally this will be the TCC and staff.

2. Opportunity for appeals to higher levels of authority within the ECC structure will be provided. Regarding disputes involving TCs or Instructors, HeartCert understands that it is the responsibility of the TC to manage and resolve any disputes, complaints, or problems that arise from activities conducted by a TC’s staff, TS’, and aligned instructors. Any complaints or problems brought to the TC by the AHA will require the TCC to develop a plan of action and a timeline for repair in consultation with the Account Manager as requested/required. All complaints or problems need to be documented and filed for future reference, should other similar instances occur. This documentation will be housed in the HeartCert roster management system and properly backed up. If necessary, legal counsel will be consulted. The AHA is not responsible for the day-to-day operations of the TC or its business practices, such as disputes about payments. The AHA will not become involved in the resolution of any disputes, complaints, or problems arising from courses taught by the TC or activities of the TC unless 1 or more of the following is involved: Course content/curriculum, Instructor qualifications, AHA administrative policies and procedures, AHA ECC science issues, AHA TC Agreement and program guidelines (Note: The AHA is not obligated to use this dispute resolution process if the TC is in breach of the TC Agreement. In that case, the matter is handled according to the terms of the TC Agreement.) Likewise, if an Instructor or Training Site is in breach of a contract the terms of that contract shall be followed.

If, after diligent efforts, the TC is unable to affect a resolution regarding any items, the TC may turn over the dispute, complaint, or problems to the AHA according to the procedure below. However, this does not diminish the responsibility of the TC for its employees, instructors, or TSs that teach courses offered through, or processed by, the TC. Complaints about the issues listed above may be submitted to the TC in writing via E-mail or letter by: A student who attended a course in which a problem arose, an instructor, a course director, TCF member, or TCC with information about the problem, An AHA volunteer or staff member with information about the problem Disputes Regarding ECC Volunteer Leadership Complaints against ECC leadership (RF, National Faculty, ECC Regional Committee, PROAD) in the Training Network must be submitted in writing to the appropriate committee or entity with authority over that individual, The Regional ECC Committee is responsible for the RF and Regional ECC Committee and Subcommittee chairs and members, The PROAD Committee is responsible for National Faculty and Regional ECC Committee chairs.

 1. All complaints shall contain the following information: a. The name and address of the person making the complaint ("Complainant"). The TC and the AHA will not permit the individual(s) making the complaint to remain anonymous. b. The name and address of the person and/or organization against which the complaint is made ("Respondent") c. A detailed written description of the dispute, complaint, or problem (eg, who, what, when, where, why) d. Reference to the appropriate rule, standard, and/or guidelines related to the matter e. Copies of all related correspondence, records, and other documentation

2. The appropriate committee chair (TCC), with the assistance of staff, will appoint a Review Committee of at least 3 persons with appropriate qualifications to review the written complaint and/or appeal, obtain additional information as appropriate, and render a recommendation to the responsible committee regarding the dispute. Due attention must be taken to avoid conflicts of interest on the part of any member of the TC/Review Committee. If so desired, the responsible committee may itself be the Review Committee and render a decision about the dispute/appeal directly. Hereafter, the committee assigned to address the grievance will be referred to as the "Review Committee." If possible situations should be handled prior to needing to turn over to the AHA and a formal review committee. When possible, HeartCert will form a committee to review the complaint and respond appropriately. The Review Committee will refer to the current program guidelines or PAM for all administrative, educational, and science issues.

3. Within 10 business days after receipt of notification of the dispute all parties shall be notified of the review. When necessary, staff and the Review Committee will issue a written notice to the TC, Complainant, and Respondent that the matter has been referred to the AHA for review if needed.

4. The Review Committee will invite the Respondent to provide a response to the complaint in writing to the Review Committee within 30 days by registered or certified mail or e-mail receipt of notice.

5. Once the response to the complaint is received, the Review Committee will determine the nature, significance, and corrective action (if any) that must be taken by the individual, instructor or TC against whom the complaint has been made or whether the complaint should be dismissed.

6. On the basis of the recommendation of the Review Committee, the responsible committee will decide the matter within 60 days after notice to the parties that a Review Committee has been established. The decision of the responsible committee may include one or more of the following as appropriate: a. Reprimand or letter of counseling to Respondent, including a statement of the corrective procedure/action b. Agreement by the Respondent to take specified corrective procedure/action c. A probationary period that applies to the Respondent, including monitoring of course(s) d. Revocation of National Faculty, RF, committee chair/membership, or other leadership status e. Request for additional information f. Dismissal of complaint .

7. If the responsible committee dismisses the grievance, a letter announcing the decision will be sent to the Complainant and Respondent. Notice will be given in the letter that the decision to dismiss the grievance may be appealed by sending an appeal in writing to the appropriate parties within 10 business days of receipt of the notification, with a copy sent to the Regional ECC Committee chair and/or representative.

8. If the grievance is not dismissed, the responsible committee will either a. Schedule a hearing within 30 days after the date of the decision, inviting the parties to appear and provide further information or b. Issue a decision and inform the parties of their right to request a hearing and further consideration of the matter.

9. Written complaints regarding AHA staff will be forwarded to the ECC Training Network Support Center. The final Review Committee for all leadership and TC disciplinary actions is the Subcommittee on ECC Program Administration.

If needed legal counsel will be consulted. HeartCert will not discriminate against any parties. HeartCert encourages constant feedback, frequent updates/training/monitoring and open communication to reduce the chance of complaints/disputes. This policy is not all-inclusive, but serves as a clear and transparent framework of expectations that all disputes will be responded to and corrective actions taken as necessary through the TC and then AHA if necessary to protect the AHA standards with common sense and good judgement adhering to all applicable standards.

I acknowledge receipt and understanding of this policy. I agree to adhere to the rules within and to all American Heart Association Standards:

Instructor/Training Site:

Name: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_