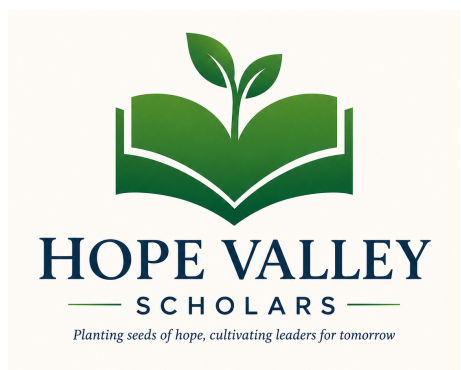




HOPE VALLEY SCHOLARS INC.

Applicant, Scholar and Parent Complaint and Appeals Policy

A safe voice, a fair review and protection from retaliation.

This policy provides applicants, scholars and families with a safe, understandable and non-retaliatory process for raising service concerns, requesting reconsideration and appealing eligible decisions.

OUR COMMITMENT: Hope Valley Scholars applies this document to the programs, people and activities within its scope. Questions or requests for an accessible copy may be sent to the contact information below.

Version	1.0
Policy owner	Board-designated Complaints Officer
Effective date	01/01/2026
Review cycle	Annual
Website address	https://www.hopevalleyscholars.org/Documents/pdf/Hope%20Valley%20Scholars%20Applicant%20Scholar%20and%20Parent%20Complaint%20and%20Appeals%20Policy.pdf

Organization: Hope Valley Scholars Inc. | U.S. 501(c)(3) public charity | EIN 41-2924425

Contact: info@hopevalleyscholars.org | +1 (302) 898-6006 | <https://www.hopevalleyscholars.org>

1. Commitment and scope

Hope Valley Scholars Inc. welcomes good-faith questions, concerns and complaints as opportunities to protect students, correct errors and improve programs. This policy applies to scholarship applicants, scholars, parents or guardians and authorized representatives.

It covers application administration, communication, accessibility, discrimination, privacy, fee-payment administration, mentorship, program conduct, probation, suspension, termination and procedural concerns. It does not replace emergency services, child-protection reporting, law enforcement, regulatory complaints or the internal Whistleblower and Organizational Complaint Policy.

2. Types of request

Request	Use when	Typical response
Question or service concern	The person needs information, correction or help with an ordinary delay or misunderstanding.	Prompt explanation, correction or referral.
Formal complaint	The person alleges unfair treatment, misconduct, discrimination, privacy failure, boundary concern or a significant service problem.	Documented impartial review and written outcome.
Scholarship reconsideration	There may be a material factual error, missing permitted evidence, conflict or procedural irregularity.	Review by a person not responsible for the original issue where practicable.
Appeal	An eligible adverse decision remains disputed after an initial outcome.	Final review of process, evidence and consistency; not an automatic new competition.
Safeguarding report	A child or other person may be unsafe or a boundary may have been violated.	Immediate safeguarding triage under the Child Safeguarding and Protection Policy.

3. How to raise a concern

Submit a concern by email to info@hopevalleyscholars.org, by telephone at +1 (302) 898-6006, through an approved online complaint form or to the designated program contact. The Board must identify an alternate contact for a complaint involving the primary recipient.

A submission should include, when safely available: name and relationship to Hope Valley Scholars; safe contact method; application or scholar reference; description and dates; people involved; relevant documents; action already requested; desired resolution; accessibility or confidentiality needs. Anonymous concerns will be considered to the extent the available information permits.

IMMEDIATE SAFETY: If a person faces immediate danger, contact the appropriate local emergency, medical, law-enforcement or child-protection authority first. Then notify Hope Valley Scholars promptly. Do not wait for the ordinary complaint process.

4. Accessibility and representation

- Accept complaints orally, in writing and through an authorized representative when needed.
- Provide reasonable communication assistance, accessible formats and language support where practicable.

- Do not require unnecessary medical, identity or sensitive information. Verify authority proportionately before disclosing confidential records.
- A minor may be supported by a parent, guardian or another safe adult, unless involving that person would create a safety risk or conflict.

5. Non-retaliation and confidentiality

Retaliation is prohibited against a person who asks a question, requests an accommodation, makes a good-faith complaint, refuses inappropriate conduct, supplies information or participates in a review. Retaliation concerns may be submitted directly to an alternate Board contact.

Information will be shared only as reasonably necessary to assess the matter, protect people, provide procedural fairness and comply with law. Hope Valley Scholars cannot promise absolute confidentiality, advance notice or a particular outcome. The respondent may need enough information to answer material allegations.

6. Triage and conflicts

The recipient shall promptly assess immediate safety, safeguarding, privacy or data-breach risk, criminal or regulatory issues, conflicts of interest, preservation of evidence and appropriate reviewer. A person named in, implicated by or materially connected to the complaint shall not control the review or appeal.

7. Response standards and target timelines

Step	Target	Action
Acknowledgment	Within 5 business days	Confirm receipt, safe contact method, reviewer or referral and next step.
Urgent triage	Immediately	Address safety, safeguarding, breach, evidence preservation and protective measures.
Initial review or resolution	Within 30 business days	Gather proportionate information, provide a fair opportunity to respond and issue an outcome.
Appeal request	Within 15 business days after outcome	State the appeal ground and material supporting information.
Appeal outcome	Within 30 business days	Affirm, modify, reverse, remand or provide a status update and revised date.

These are service targets, not a waiver of a legal deadline or a guarantee that a complex matter will conclude within the target. If delayed, Hope Valley Scholars should provide a status update unless doing so would create a safety, confidentiality or legal risk.

8. Fair review

- Identify the issues, applicable policy, available evidence and requested remedy.
- Interview or request information only from people reasonably connected to the matter.
- Give an affected person a meaningful opportunity to respond to material allegations, subject to safety and legal limits.
- Use the more-likely-than-not standard for ordinary internal findings unless a law or policy requires another standard.

- Separate fact findings, policy conclusions, corrective action and confidential personnel or safeguarding information.
- Document the reviewer, conflicts check, evidence considered, findings, decision, actions and follow-up date.

9. Scholarship reconsideration and appeal grounds

A scholarship decision may be reconsidered or appealed for a material factual error; significant permitted evidence unavailable earlier despite reasonable diligence; failure to follow an approved process; undisclosed reviewer conflict; discrimination or retaliation; failure to consider an approved accommodation; or a sanction inconsistent with policy. Limited funds, comparative judgment or disagreement with a lawful approved criterion alone does not establish error.

10. Outcomes

Possible outcomes include explanation, apology, correction, restored access, accommodation, new reviewer, rescoring under the same rubric, reconsideration, revised payment, support plan, rematch, training, policy improvement, disciplinary referral, protective restriction or no change. The complainant will receive the outcome and reasons that can lawfully and safely be shared, but not confidential information about another person.

11. External rights

Using this process is not required before seeking emergency help or reporting to police, child-protection, the Kenya Office of the Data Protection Commissioner, a U.S. regulator, a school authority or another competent body. Hope Valley Scholars will not knowingly misstate or shorten an external filing deadline.

12. Records and review

Complaint, appeal, safeguarding and retaliation records shall be restricted and retained under the Document Retention and Destruction Policy. The Board shall review de-identified trends at least annually to identify delay, recurrence, barriers, conflicts and needed corrective action.

Appendix A - Complaint or appeal intake

Name and relationship to Hope Valley Scholars

Safe contact method and any accessibility or language support

Application or scholar reference, if applicable

Concern, important dates, people involved and action already requested

Requested resolution and whether there is an immediate safety concern

Submitted by

Signature or confirmation

Date

Document control: The current public version is maintained by Hope Valley Scholars Inc.; printed or downloaded copies may become outdated. **Related:** [Child Safeguarding Policy](#) | [Whistleblower Policy](#) | [Privacy Policy](#).
Version 1.0 | Effective 01/01/2026 | Next scheduled review: 01/01/2027.