

How To File a Complaint to the US Chess States & Affiliate Committee

US Chess maintains a standing States & Affiliates Committee (SAC) to review matters pertaining to the duties and responsibilities of all US Chess affiliates, including the state affiliates, as articulated in the US Chess Bylaws and in paragraph 7 of the Delegate Actions of Continuing Interest (DACI). In cases of doubt as to the application or interpretation of the duties and responsibilities of all affiliates, the SAC will examine the matter and render a decision to the US Chess Executive Board. To be clear, the SAC only deals with matters of affiliate duties and responsibilities as articulated in the US Chess Bylaws and DACI. The document State Chapter Requirements and Responsibilities (DACI 1991-27) can be found at the following link: <https://new.uschess.org/sites/default/files/media/documents/state-chapter-requirements-and-recommendations-daci-1991-27.pdf>

A complaint against one or more affiliates may be filed by:

1. A person or another affiliate whose membership in US Chess is in good standing.
2. A parent, official guardian, or chess coach on behalf of a player who is under the age of 16.

We recommend you begin by contacting Judy Misner by email (jmisner@uschess.org), phone (931-200-3413), who can assist your understanding of the overall process. If you opt to file your complaint by regular mail to the US Chess office (P. O. Box 775308, Saint Louis, MO 63177), please mark your envelope to the attention of Judy Misner (see address at the end of this document). You should use a computer to prepare and print your document, because hand-written documents can be difficult to read. In addition to your written complaint, you must provide US Chess a \$50 Good Faith Deposit check. This fee is subject to change as determined by US Chess. The Good Faith Deposit will be returned to you by US Chess, unless the SAC finds that your complaint is frivolous.

As the Complainant, your input to the SAC should make direct and specific reference to those section(s) of the Bylaws and/or paragraphs from the DACI that you feel the affiliate has violated or failed to uphold. You should organize your documentation using a cover letter signed by the Complainant, with as many “attachments or enclosures” you feel are necessary. We cannot over-emphasize that your submission to the SAC should include ALL evidence you want the SAC to review. You may provide your evidence in several forms including, but not limited to, statements from other US Chess members, any relevant email correspondence, and copies of webpages or Social Media postings, etc. The SAC only reviews the evidence/information you submit—it does not conduct independent research to find what you failed to provide. Finally, when you send in your input, please be certain to provide current and reliable contact information for yourself, as we have found that information in the US Chess membership database is not always up-to-date.

After the US Chess Office receives your written complaint and Good Faith Deposit, the office forwards your package to the SAC. The SAC’s first step is to examine your complaint and determine whether they will accept it because it falls within their jurisdiction. In certain situations, but not always, the SAC may ask the US Chess office liaison to contact you or other individuals for additional statements before they make a decision to accept the case. If the SAC votes that your complaint is not within their jurisdiction, you will be notified by the US Chess Office.

If the SAC votes to accept your case, you should expect the SAC to reach out to you with a few additional questions designed to help committee members either clarify matters, or to obtain more specific information. You also should anticipate the SAC will place a deadline on your response. When the US

Chess Office receives your response, the office staff will send it to the SAC. If you need an extension to prepare your input, you must request the extension from the US Chess office (usually by phone or email).

The SAC also will reach out to the Respondent (e.g. the affiliate(s) you are accusing) to discern their side of the issue. The SAC will provide the Respondent(s) with a copy of the Complainant's input. In a similar way, once the Respondent replies to the SAC, the Complainant also will be given the opportunity to see the Respondent's input—and to provide a response. The SAC may repeat this process with both parties until it believes it has a thorough understanding of what happened.

The SAC will then consider all the information from the Complainant and Respondent to render a decision to uphold the complaint, or dismiss it. The SAC's decision will come to you and the Respondent in the form of an official letter from US Chess, usually by certified mail. If the SAC dismisses the Complainant's case, that decision is final—there is no appeal. However, if the SAC votes to sanction the affiliate(s), they will have at least 30 days from the date the decision letter is sent to submit a formal appeal to the US Chess Executive Board through the US Chess office. Appeals to SAC decisions must be submitted in writing by US mail to US Chess, Attn: Judy Misner, P. O. Box 775308, Saint Louis, MO 63177, or by email to the US Chess Executive Director, Carol Meyer, at carol.meyer@uschess.org and Judy Misner at jmisner@uschess.org.

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