



Complaints, Disputes, and Appeals

1.0 PURPOSE AND SCOPE

This procedure defines the TUV USA responsibilities for receiving, evaluating, and making decisions on appeals, complaints and disputes concerning the certification system activities or decisions, and the maintenance of relative records. This process is subject to TUV USA requirements for confidentiality.

2.0 REFERENCES

ISO 17021 sections 9.7.1 and 9.8.4

3.0 RESPONSIBILITIES

TUV USA requires that appeals, complaints and disputes to be submitted in writing to the attention of the Director of Operations. The Director will receive, acknowledge, and take appropriate action to resolve each written complaint. Resolutions will be communicated in writing to the individual filing the complaint and records will be maintained in the corporate office.

4.0 APPLICABLE DOCUMENTS

F-026 Customer Concern Form

5.0 PROCEDURE

5.1 There are two types of complaints covered by this process: complaints by TUV-USA clients against TUV-USA, and complaints against TUV-USA certified clients by interested third parties.

All appeals, complaints and disputes communicated to TUV USA will be addressed by the Director of Operations or designee in a timely manner. Complaints represent a source of information as to possible nonconformity. On receipt of a complaint, the Director or designee will establish, and where appropriate take action on, the cause of the nonconformity, including any predetermining (or predisposing) factors within TUV-USA's management system. The cause will be determined and appropriate action will be implemented. Resolutions may include corrective actions relative to the certification process.

Should it be determined to be a valid concern, TUV-USA will develop corrective action, which includes measures for, as appropriate:

- a) restoring conformity to ISO 17021 as quickly as practicable;
- b) preventing recurrence;
- c) assessing the effectiveness of the corrective measures adopted



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d) performing a short notice audit as explained in P001

Personnel will not be employed to investigate any appeal, complaint or dispute if they have been directly involved in activities relating to the issue.

The following steps will be employed:

- Receipt and recording of the concern
- Review by the Director or designee in ten business days.
- Written response to the issuer of the concern within fifteen business days.

In the event the issuer does not agree with the decision of the Director or designee, an appeal can be made to the President of TUV-USA. Within fifteen business days, the President will respond to the issuer regarding his decision.

If the concern cannot be resolved at this point, the client may request a registration transfer or certification cancellation.

TUV USA shall verify client quality management system corrective action records regarding complaints from customers or other third parties in a special audit or in the subsequent surveillance or recertification audit.

5.2 Appeals and Disputes

Client organizations are advised of the appeals process during the opening meeting of the on site activity. Should it occur that the client does not agree with an audit finding, an appeal may be filed.

Within ten business days, the Director or designee will review the audit documentation, and consult with the audit team and client as necessary to determine the validity of the appeal. Upon completion of the review, the client and the audit team will be informed of the decision.

The client may dispute the result to the President, who will perform an additional review of the validity of the appeal within fifteen business days. Should the dispute be against an audit performed by the President, the Director or designee will perform the review. Upon completion of the review, the client and the audit team will be informed of the decision.

If the concern cannot be resolved at this point, the client may request a registration transfer or certification cancellation.