

Required Notifications Following Adverse Actions, Sanctions and Related Actions

When the Higher Learning Commission (HLC) Board of Trustees places an institution on Notice or Probation, issues a Show-Cause Order, denies an application for Change of Control, Structure or Organization, or denies or withdraws accreditation or candidacy, HLC is obliged to issue a Public Disclosure Notice of that action and to provide relevant information to other recognized accreditors, the U.S. Department of Education and state higher education agencies. Separately, the institution is required to notify its governing board, faculty, staff, students and other constituents of HLC's action in a timely manner.

HLC Communications

When HLC's Board takes one of the actions listed above, HLC takes the following steps to communicate the action to the institution, recognized accreditors, the U.S. Department of Education, state higher education agencies and the public.

Public Disclosure Notice (PDN)

HLC sends a PDN that describes the action taken by the Board to the institution, U.S. Department of Education and applicable state higher education agencies, and also makes it available on [HLC's website](#). The PDN contains the findings of the Board associated with the action. If applicable, the PDN also includes official comments by the institution in response to the action. For adverse actions, the PDN provides

information about how the institution may appeal the Board's action. The PDN is updated as needed to reflect additional information or new developments with the institution.

Notification to the Institution

HLC officially communicates the action through an Action Letter to the institution within 14 days of the date on which the action was taken. The PDN is included with the Action Letter. HLC emails the letter to the institution's chief executive officer (CEO) and Accreditation Liaison Officer (ALO) and sends a paper copy to the chair of the institution's governing board by regular mail. In cases of Notice, Probation, Show-Cause, or withdrawal or denial of accreditation, HLC also sends a paper copy of the Action Letter to the institution's CEO by certified mail.

Notification to State Agencies, U.S. Department of Education and Recognized Accreditors

HLC copies the U.S. Department of Education and the primary state higher education agency (if applicable) on the email it sends to the institution's president and ALO notifying them of the action. Within 30 days of the action, HLC also emails a summary of the action to other state higher education agencies and accreditors recognized by the U.S. Department of Education and the Council for Higher Education Accreditation (CHEA).

Information Made Available to the Public

Within one day of issuing the Action Letter, HLC publishes the Action Letter and the PDN on its website. The information appears on the institution's Statement of Accreditation Status in HLC's online [Directory of Institutions](#).

In addition, HLC updates the Mark of Accreditation Status that displays on the institution's website to reflect the action taken. HLC's [Obligations of Membership](#) require every member institution to post the Mark of Accreditation Status on at least one page of its website, linking users directly to the institution's status on HLC's website. All member institutions must comply with this obligation.

Related Policies

[Notice of Accreditation Actions, HLC Public Notices and Public Statements](#) (COMM.A.10.010)

[Obligations of Membership](#) (CRRT.D.10.010)

[Notice](#) (INST.E.10.010)

[Probation](#) (INST.E.20.010)

[Show-Cause \(Procedural Order\)](#) (INST.E.30.010)

[Denial or Withdrawal of Status](#) (INST.E.60.010)

[Processes for Seeking Approval of Change of Control, Structure or Organization](#) (INST.G.20.020)

Institutional Obligations to Notify Constituents

HLC policy requires that an institution on Notice or Probation, under a Show-Cause Order or having received an action for withdrawal or denial of accreditation inform its constituents about the action in a timely manner and not more than seven days after receiving the Action Letter from HLC.

The institution must inform the following individuals about the action:

- Board members
- Administrators, faculty and staff
- Current and prospective students
- Any other constituencies

In its communications, the institution must include directions on how to contact HLC for further information. The institution should send drafts of these notifications to its HLC staff liaison for review and approval prior to publication and distribution.

Submit Notifications to HLC

The institution is required to submit copies of its published and distributed disclosures to HLC no later than seven days following receipt of HLC's Action Letter. The disclosures should be submitted as a single PDF file at hlcommission.org/upload. Select "Information About Institutional Disclosures" from the list of submission options to ensure the materials are sent to the correct HLC staff member.

Additional Disclosures

HLC policy also requires that the institution disclose this status whenever it refers to its HLC accreditation. The institution should make certain that it uses HLC's Mark of Accreditation Status on its website as required. For further information regarding the institution's public disclosure obligations, see HLC's policy on the related sanction or adverse action.