

# Voluntary Resignation of HLC Membership

Under [HLC Policy INST.B.30.010: Voluntary Resignation of Accreditation or Candidacy](#), an institution may elect to voluntarily resign its membership with HLC at any time, including during the candidacy process. Institutions may choose to resign accreditation or candidacy with HLC for any reason, including closing and ceasing operations, merging with another institution, or changing accreditors.

An institution contemplating resignation is encouraged to discuss its plans with its HLC staff liaison as soon as possible, and in advance of submitting a formal resignation.

Depending on the circumstances for an institution's resignation, additional requirements may also apply. For example, in some instances, such as when an institution is closing or merging with an institution that is not accredited by HLC, an institution may be required to file a Provisional Plan, which may need to include agreements with other institutions for teaching out its students. See [Teach-Out Requirements](#) for more information. If required, the plan and agreement must be submitted separately from the resignation and must be approved through HLC's normal decision-making process.

Likewise, if an institution is merging with another institution accredited by HLC, the merger must be approved by HLC prior to its consummation. See [Change of Control, Structure or Organization](#) for more information. Once the merger has been completed, the merging institution must submit its resignation to HLC. The effective date of the resignation must reflect the effective date of the merger.

The resignation process requires the submission of the Voluntary Resignation Form. Upon accepting an institution's resignation and, if applicable, again upon the effective date of resignation, HLC will notify external parties, including the Department of Education, state agencies and other accreditors of the resignation.

## Notification of Resignation to HLC

An institution resigning affiliation with HLC must submit the [Voluntary Resignation Form](#), including all information as required.

The effective date of an institution's resignation must be within one year of the date of notification to HLC. In addition, for accredited institutions, the effective date of resignation also must not exceed the maximum interval for Reaffirmation of Accreditation; for candidate institutions, the effective date also must not be more than four years from the date Candidacy was awarded.

An institution also must notify the state higher education agency and other accrediting agencies with which it has a relationship of its resignation from HLC. If the institution is closing, it will need to ensure that it has made arrangements for student transcripts, including following any applicable state law requirements.

At any time after receiving an institution's Voluntary Resignation Form, and within five days of receipt, HLC will reply to the institution confirming receipt and formally accepting the effective date of resignation. Upon acceptance by HLC, the resignation is generally irrevocable, as determined in the discretion of HLC. Any further evaluative activities with HLC will be placed on hold and then canceled.

## HLC Notifications Regarding Resignations

Under HLC policy and federal regulation, HLC is required to notify the U.S. Department of Education, applicable state agencies and other recognized accreditors within 10 days of receipt of a voluntary resignation and to notify the public within 30 days. HLC will copy the U.S. Department of Education and applicable state agencies on the response from HLC accepting the institution's resignation. A Public Disclosure Notice will accompany the response and will be posted to HLC's website within one business day of it being provided to the institution, fulfilling HLC's obligations to notify the public. The Public Disclosure Notice will include the effective date of the resignation, the reason for the resignation, information on whom to contact for more information, and information specific to an institution closing (such as transcript information for students), if applicable.

Within five days of HLC's acceptance of the institution's resignation, HLC will also provide a separate notification of the resignation to external agencies, which will include other recognized accreditors, informing them that HLC has accepted the resignation. This notification will also contain information about the resignation, including a link to the Public Disclosure Notice.

If a Public Disclosure Notice was posted prior to the effective date (because the date of acceptance of resignation and the effective date differ), it will be updated to reflect when the institution's resignation is effective.

## Institutional Obligations

### Commitments Prior to Effective Date of Resignation

After submitting a voluntary resignation, an institution must continue to adhere to all HLC requirements, including the [Obligations of Membership](#), until the effective date of resignation. Institutions must make sure that they have satisfied all financial obligations to HLC prior to resignation.

### After the Effective Date of Resignation

On the effective date of the resignation of accreditation or candidacy, the institution's status will be changed to "inactive" in HLC's online [Directory of Institutions](#) and in HLC's various databases. The institution will no longer have access to online systems, such as the Institutional Update and Assurance System. Additionally, HLC's Mark of Accreditation Status will no longer display on the institution's website.

The Public Disclosure Notice describing the resignation will remain on HLC's website for three years. The institution's Statement of Accreditation Status in the Directory of Institutions will include a permanent note marking its effective date of resignation with HLC.

The institution will remain responsible for any outstanding invoices from HLC.

## Process for Reapplying for Accreditation

After resigning from HLC, an institution is ineligible for membership for a period of one year. If an institution seeks accredited status with HLC following a resignation, it must reapply through the [Eligibility Process](#).

An institution that ceases to operate as an educational institution or that loses its legal authorization to operate without submitting a voluntary resignation will be subject to withdrawal of its status, as detailed in HLC policy. An institution that has had its status withdrawn may not reapply for status with HLC for two years.