

Ideagarden Institute is committed to providing programs and services in a fair, inclusive, and nondiscriminatory manner. In accordance with federal civil rights laws and EPA requirements (40 C.F.R. Part 5 & 7), we have established the following procedure for individuals who wish to file a complaint or grievance related to discrimination, harassment, unfair treatment, retaliation, and intimidation in connection with our services, programs, or activities.

We are committing to providing a prompt and fair resolution of complaints that allege a violation.

### **Who Can File a Complaint**

Any person who believes they have been excluded from participation in, denied the benefits of, or otherwise subjected to discrimination under any program or activity of Ideagarden Institute, on the basis of **race, color, national origin, sex, age, or disability**, may file a complaint.

### **How to File a Complaint**

Complaints may be submitted in writing, verbally, or via email to our designated Coordinator:

#### **Cheyenne Pritchard**

Non-discrimination & Civil Rights Coordinator

Ideagarden Institute

PO Box 733, Healdsburg, CA, 95448

[CRcoordinator@ideagarden.com](mailto:CRcoordinator@ideagarden.com)

515-203-9913

Accommodations will be made for individuals with disabilities or limited English proficiency upon request.

### **Complaint Requirements**

Your complaint should include:

- Your name, address, and contact information
- A description of the alleged discrimination, including:
  - What happened
  - When and where it happened
  - Who was involved
- Any supporting documentation (if available)

Complaints must be filed within **180 days** of the alleged incident. Ideagarden Institute may waive the filing requirement in its discretion, in order to address allegations of potential discrimination caused by pending actions at the earliest appropriate and feasible juncture; or, for good cause, to address complaints filed more than 180 days after an alleged violation.

## Investigation Process

1. The Civil Rights Coordinator will acknowledge receipt of your complaint within **10 business days**.
2. An impartial review will be conducted within **180 days**, during which we may request additional information or interview relevant individuals. Ideagarden Institute may call on legal counsel for support as appropriate.
  - a. The investigation may include interviews of the complainant, employees, contractors, subcontractors, subgrantees, those named in the complaint, and witnesses to the alleged discrimination, as well as a review of any physical or written evidence. If more information is needed to resolve the case, the Non-Discrimination Coordinator may contact the complainant. The complainant has 30 days to send requested information to the investigator assigned to the case.
  - b. The preponderance of the evidence standard will be applied during the analysis of each complaint.
  - c. Note that the Non-Discrimination Coordinator may reach out for additional information to work towards informal resolution of the complaint through direct communication with the complainant or their representative. Informal resolution may include open dialogue, discussion using a staff member as an intermediary, or other process that results in an acceptable solution within thirty (30) business days from the acceptance of the complaint. Any such informal resolution agreement must be signed by both the Non-Discrimination Coordinator and the complainant.
3. A written response will be issued within **180 days** of receiving the completed complaint, outlining the findings and any actions to be taken. After the investigation concludes, the complainant will receive a written notice detailing:
  - a. The findings of the investigation
  - b. Whether discrimination or retaliation was found
  - c. A summary of the investigation process
  - d. Any corrective actions that will be implemented (if applicable)

## External Filing Option

You may also file a complaint directly with the **U.S. Environmental Protection Agency Office of Civil Rights**:

U.S. EPA Office of Civil Rights  
Mail Code 2310A  
1200 Pennsylvania Avenue NW  
Washington, DC 20460  
Phone: (202) 564-3316 | TTY: (202) 564-8129  
Email: [OCR@epa.gov](mailto:OCR@epa.gov)

**Confidentiality**

All complaints will be handled confidentially to the extent possible, consistent with the need to conduct a fair and thorough investigation.

**Retaliation and Intimidation**

Any claims of intimidation or retaliation related to the complaint process will be handled promptly and fairly pursuant to the below procedure and in the same manner as other claims of discrimination.

**Annual review**

This procedure will be reviewed on an annual basis to make appropriate changes to ensure they are prompt, fair, and aligned with regulations.