

JUDICIAL AFFAIRS OFFICE

Roles, Responsibilities, and Resources

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Fiat justitia, ruat caelum.

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Land Acknowledgement

The Judicial Affairs Office acknowledges operating on the traditional Anishinaabe and Haudenosaunee territory of Katarokwi (Kingston), lands unjustly taken through the Crawford Purchase of 1783, a treaty the Crown later broke, with impacts that continue to be felt by Indigenous communities today. As settlers benefiting from these systemic structures, we recognize that words alone are not enough. Through our work facilitating judicial proceedings and upholding student rights, the Judicial Affairs Office is committed to ensuring that Indigenous and marginalized voices are actively amplified and protected within our processes. We strive to administer justice in a way that reflects Indigenous values of community, restoration, and accountability, and commit to continuously decolonizing our governance practices to ensure our proceedings remain fair, accessible, and equitable for all students on this land.

Judicial Affairs Office (JAO)

Understanding Our Roles, Judicial Processes, and Available Resources

1. Our Roles

The Judicial Affairs Office (JAO) is jointly led by two Judicial Managers: The Judicial Case Manager and the Judicial Disputes & Policy Manager. While each manager has distinct primary responsibilities, both work collaboratively to oversee the administration and operations of the office, supervise Judicial Deputies, support educational and outreach initiatives, and maintain the independence and integrity of the AMS Judicial System.

Judicial Case Manager

The Judicial Case Manager is primarily responsible for overseeing Category 1 Non-Academic Misconduct (NAM) cases referred to the Judicial Affairs Office by Queen's University's Non-Academic Misconduct Intake Office (NAMIO).

Acting as the Case Officer for these matters, the Judicial Case Manager administers investigations, reviews allegations and relevant evidence, communicates with involved parties, including respondents, complainants, and witnesses, and explores appropriate resolutions in accordance with applicable policies and principles of procedural fairness. Where necessary, matters may proceed to the Judicial Council for adjudication.

Beyond case management, the Judicial Case Manager provides educational and peer-to-peer guidance to students navigating the NAM system, helping them better understand the process, their rights and responsibilities, and available support resources. The role also contributes to student outreach, conduct education, and broader initiatives aimed at improving the accessibility and effectiveness of the JAO.

Judicial Disputes & Policy Manager

The Judicial Disputes & Policy Manager is primarily responsible for investigating Suspected Policy Infractions (SPIs), which involve alleged violations of AMS policies or other applicable policies within the jurisdiction of the AMS Judicial System.

This role involves reviewing complaints, examining relevant governance documents, gathering information, and overseeing investigations into alleged policy violations using the Queen's Policy Infringement Protocol (PIP). Where appropriate, the Judicial Disputes & Policy Manager facilitates resolutions or initiates proceedings before the Judicial Council for adjudication.

Beyond investigations, the Judicial Disputes & Policy Manager supports policy interpretation, review, and development, particularly concerning AMS governance, Member Societies, and other student organizations. The role helps promote accountability, procedural fairness, and a clearer understanding of governance policies and responsibilities across the AMS.

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2. What Is the Judicial Affairs Office (JAO)?

The Judicial Affairs Office (JAO) is the independent investigative branch of the Alma Mater Society (AMS) Judicial System at Queen's University. Established as part of a student-led judicial tradition dating back to 1898, the Judicial System consists of two distinct but complementary bodies: the Judicial Affairs Office and the Judicial Council (JCOMM).

The Judicial Affairs Office (JAO) is responsible for investigating and administering matters within its jurisdiction, primarily Category 1 Non-Academic Misconduct (NAM) cases referred by Queen's University and Suspected Policy Infractions (SPIs) involving applicable AMS policies.

The Judicial Council (JCOMM) serves as the adjudicative branch of the Judicial System. When a matter proceeds to a formal hearing, the Council considers the information and arguments presented, determines whether a violation has occurred, and issues decisions in accordance with the relevant governing policies.

The fundamental distinction is that the JAO investigates matters (like a legal office), while the Judicial Council adjudicates them (like a jury). Although they operate within the same Judicial System, both bodies maintain independence from one another to protect impartiality, avoid conflicts of interest, and ensure procedural fairness.

The AMS Judicial System is guided by five core principles:

- **Restorative Justice:** Emphasizing accountability, repairing harm, and meaningful resolutions.
- **Peer-Administered:** Recognizing the value of students supporting and holding fellow students accountable.
- **Complaint-Driven:** Responding to matters brought forward through appropriate complaints or referrals.
- **Non-Adversarial:** Encouraging collaborative resolutions rather than unnecessarily adversarial proceedings.
- **Procedural Fairness:** Ensuring fair notice, impartial decision-making, and opportunities for involved parties to respond.

Together, these principles reflect the Judicial System's commitment to fairness, accountability, education, and student-centred justice.

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3. What Is a Suspected Policy Infraction (SPI)?

A Suspected Policy Infraction (SPI) refers to an allegation that an individual, group, or organization has violated an applicable AMS policy or procedure within the jurisdiction of the AMS Judicial System.

SPI matters may involve AMS members, student organizations, Member Societies, or individuals acting within AMS governance structures. Unlike Non-Academic Misconduct cases, which concern violations of Queen's University's Student Code of Conduct, SPI cases focus on whether applicable AMS policies or governance requirements have been violated.

The SPI process generally begins with a written complaint or notice identifying an alleged policy violation. The Judicial Affairs Office assesses whether there are

grounds for an investigation and, where appropriate, gathers relevant information, communicates with involved parties, and investigates the matter.

Not every SPI matter requires a formal hearing. Depending on the circumstances, cases may be resolved through an appropriate agreement or settlement. Where a resolution cannot be reached, the matter may proceed to the Judicial Council for a hearing and decision.

The Judicial Disputes & Policy Manager is primarily responsible for overseeing SPI investigations and supporting the interpretation and application of relevant policies throughout this process.

For further information about SPI procedures, jurisdiction, and the rights and responsibilities of involved parties, please consult the AMS Judicial Policy, available through the Governance Policy webpage.

AMS Governance Policies – Judicial Policy

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4. What Is Non-Academic Misconduct (NAM)?

Non-Academic Misconduct (NAM) refers to conduct that violates Queen's University's Student Code of Conduct. This can include behaviours such as disruption, misuse of property, misrepresentation, unauthorized entry, or other conduct prohibited under the Code.

NAM cases are classified into two categories based on the nature, seriousness, and circumstances of the alleged misconduct.

- **Category 1:** Generally, involves less serious incidents of non-academic misconduct. The Judicial Affairs Office administers Category 1 cases specifically referred to by NAMIO.
- **Category 2:** Generally, involves more serious incidents of misconduct and is typically administered by the University's Student Conduct Office or another appropriate conduct unit.

The Non-Academic Misconduct Intake Office (NAMIO) is responsible for receiving reports of potential misconduct, determining whether the matter falls under the

Student Code of Conduct, classifying cases, and referring them to the appropriate NAM Unit.

The JAO does not independently determine which NAM cases fall within its jurisdiction. Its authority is limited to Category 1 NAM cases formally referred by NAMIO. Once a matter is referred, the Judicial Case Manager normally serves as the Case Officer, overseeing the investigative process and exploring appropriate resolutions.

Although the JAO does not have jurisdiction over every student conduct concern, the office can provide general guidance to students navigating the NAM system and help identify appropriate referral pathways when a matter falls outside its responsibilities.

NAM Units and Contact Information

For inquiries, reporting concerns, or assistance navigating the Non-Academic Misconduct system, please contact the appropriate office below.

Non-Academic Misconduct Intake Office (NAMIO)

Responsible for receiving reports of potential misconduct, assessing allegations, determining case classifications, and referring matters to the appropriate NAM Unit.

Email: centralnam.office@queensu.ca

Student Conduct Office

Generally responsible for Category 2 NAM cases and other student conduct matters within its jurisdiction.

Email: studentconductoffice@queensu.ca

AMS Judicial Affairs Office

Responsible for investigating Category 1 NAM cases referred by NAMIO, alongside Suspected Policy Infractions within the AMS Judicial System.

Email: judicial.case@ams.queensu.ca

Residence Conduct Office

Responsible for addressing applicable student conduct matters within Queen's University residences.

Email: residence.conduct@queensu.ca

Athletics & Recreation Conduct Office

Responsible for applicable conduct matters involving Queen's Athletics and Recreation.

Email: athletic@queensu.ca

Student Conduct and Care

Provides guidance and support to students experiencing personal or conduct-related concerns and helps connect them with appropriate University resources.

Email: caresupportservices@queensu.ca

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5. Learn More About the AMS Judicial System

For a more comprehensive understanding of the AMS Judicial System, including its history, structure, guiding principles, and the respective responsibilities of the Judicial Affairs Office and Judicial Council, we encourage you to read:

Behind the Gavel: Inside the AMS Judicial System

This article provides further insight into the unique history of student-led justice at Queen's University and explains how the Judicial System promotes accountability, restorative justice, and procedural fairness within the student community.

It also explores the distinct responsibilities of the Judicial Managers, the relationship between the investigative and adjudicative branches, and the importance of maintaining an independent, fair, and accessible judicial process.

6. Additional Support and Resources

We recognize that navigating judicial processes, student conduct matters, or governance-related concerns can be challenging. The Judicial Affairs Office is committed to helping students better understand the processes available to them and directing individuals toward appropriate support when necessary.

If you require further assistance, additional guidance, or support beyond the jurisdiction of the JAO, we encourage you to consult the following resource:

Student Support and Resources

This resource is provided as an additional point of reference for individuals seeking assistance or further information about available support options.

The Judicial Affairs Office remains available to provide general guidance regarding its jurisdiction, responsibilities, and the AMS Judicial System.

If you have any questions or concerns, please feel free to contact us at judicial@ams.queensu.ca and one of the Judicial Affairs Managers will contact you back.

AMS Judicial Affairs Office

John Deutsch University Centre (JDUC), Room 126

87 Union Street, Kingston, Ontario