



GAP Connections Certification Program Appeals Process

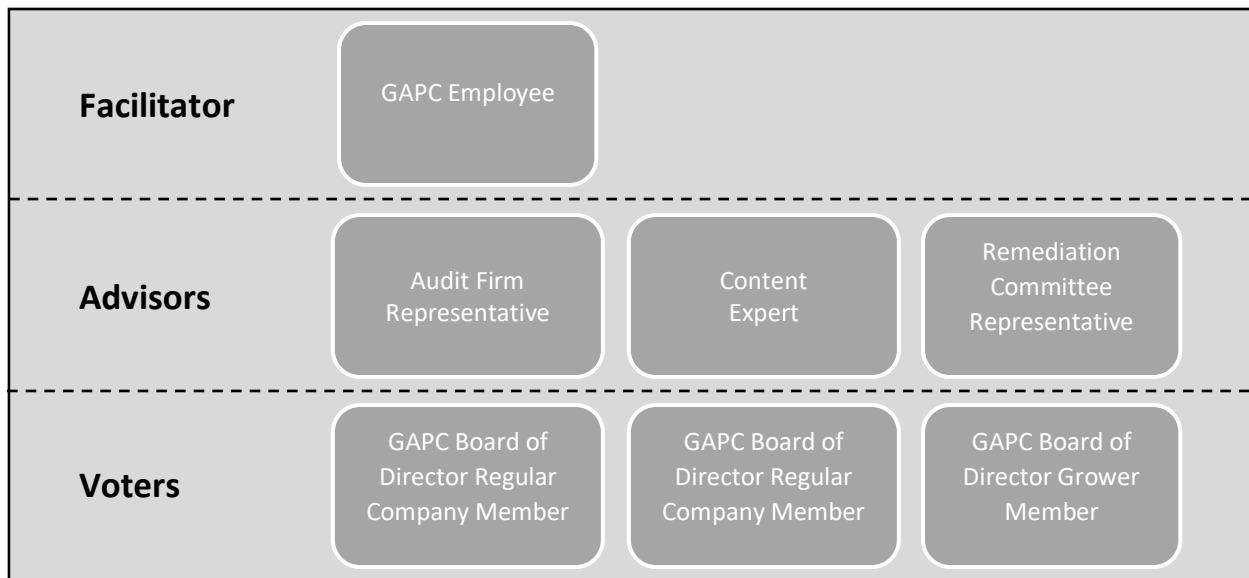
Introduction

There may be situations in which GAPC Grower Members who participate in a GAPC Certification Program do not agree with the monitoring or investigative visit findings. Thus, GAP Connections offers an appeals process for these growers. The appeals policy requires GAPC grower members to write a formal letter to GAP Connections identifying their complaint/appeal within 30 days from the date GAPC issues notice of Certification or denial of Certification. The following document outlines the appeals committee and the appeals process following the submission of the letter.

Committee Structure:

The Appeals Committee is comprised of (1) A Facilitator: An employee of GAP Connections; (2) Advisors: An employee or contractor of an approved auditing firm (other than the auditor who conducted the audit or site visit), a content expert depending on the nature of the appeal (i.e. expert in crop production, labor, etc.), and a representative of the Remediation Committee that reviewed the case; and (3) Voters: Three members of the GAPC Board of Directors consisting of two Regular Company Members and one GAPC Grower Member. The Voters are the only Appeals Committee Members that will cast a vote to decide the appeal.

Appeals Committee Members



Appeals Process

The appeals process begins when the GAPC Grower Member submits an appeal with respect to his/hers GAPC Certification results or findings. The GAPC Grower Member must submit a formal written appeal,



GAP Connections Certification Program Appeals Process

supporting documentation, and an initial appeal fee of \$250¹ to GAP Connections within 30 days from the date GAPC issues notice of GAPC Certification or denial of GAPC Certification. If an appeal is being made due to a denial from failure to meet a remediation deadline an explanation of the extenuating circumstances that caused the failure to meet the deadline must be provided in the written appeal. The party responsible for the remaining costs of the appeal will be dependent upon the outcome of the appeal. The GAPC grower member will pay any additional costs if the appeal is denied (i.e. legal, investigation/review of documentation, etc.). If the appeal is approved GAPC will refund the initial appeal fee and GAPC will be responsible for any remaining costs associated with the appeals process.

A GAPC Grower Member who appeals and has outstanding remediable items should, as a best practice, complete all remaining remediation required for GAPC Certification.

Upon receiving the formal written appeal, GAPC will inform the Appeals Committee of the appeal and call for a meeting. Throughout the appeals process, all GAPC Grower Member information will be removed from any documentation that goes before the committee to keep the process anonymous unless the GAPC Grower Member chooses to disclose his/her identity and present his/her case to the Appeals Committee.

The Appeals Committee will review the appeal/complaint and supporting documentation provided by the GAPC Grower Member. When necessary, the Appeals Committee may consult with an attorney. The responsibility of the Appeals Committee is to render a final verdict on the appeal within 30 days of receiving appeal. GAPC will facilitate the meetings of the Appeals Committee and will provide the verdict to the GAPC Grower Member. Once the verdict has been rendered the remainder of the appeals cost will be paid based on the outcome.

¹ The appeals fee will be a fixed fee paid by the grower to cover the costs of content experts and the auditor who are involved in the Initial Appeals Committee.

GAPC Certification Program Appeals Process

