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Policy

The Network is committed to promoting a collaborative and collegial work environment by ensuring that employees and management have opportunity to resolve their issues, complaints and grievances in a fair and prompt manner.

Procedures

1. Awareness

Upon commencement of employment, all Employees will receive information on the procedures available to them to file a complaint, grievance or appeal. The information will be provided at any time an Employee requests it.

2. Complaint Procedure

- a. All individuals are encouraged, wherever possible, to discuss and resolve concerns or difficulties directly with the person(s) concerned. This is the informal stage of the grievance process.
- b. Employees may bypass direct lines of communication only if it is a complaint of abuse, fraud, or harassment.
- c. In the event that an Employee is dissatisfied with the outcome of the Complaint Procedure they shall submit the concern in writing, within five working days, to the supervisor of the recipient of the complaint which initiates the grievance procedure.

3. Overview of the Grievance

Procedure In the event of a formal grievance:



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- a. The complainant will be given the opportunity to present their case;
- b. All matters arising shall be accurately documented and recorded. Records shall be maintained for a minimum period of ten (10) years and treated as confidential in accordance with the Network's policy on information privacy;
- c. A written statement of the outcomes will be issued at each stage of the process giving due reasons for decisions reached;
- d. The complainant will have the right to have a representative present who may be a relative, friend or colleague, but not a legal representative, during any negotiations with the Network or its representatives;
- e. The complainant will not be required to meet any costs associated with lodging a grievance, provided the procedures contained herein are adhered to;
- f. The complainant shall not be subject to discrimination, victimisation or any other form of harassment as a result of actions taken under these guidelines.

2. Steps in the Grievance Process

- a. Procedural Protocols
 - i. The employee may withdraw their request for grievance at any time prior to the grievance meeting.
 - ii. In the event that an employee has a grievance regarding the employee's supervisor, the employee will submit the grievance to the Executive Director.
 - iii. In the event that the employee has a grievance regarding the Executive Director, the employee will submit their grievance to the Chairperson of the Leadership Team.
- b. When an employee has a grievance with another employee, they will have a verbal conference with their Supervisor(s). The Supervisor(s) will meet with each Employee separately, or by meeting collectively with all parties involved.
 - i. The Supervisor will act as an arbitrator and assumes responsibility for the resolution of the Grievance.
 - ii. An Employee may request a support person be present when they



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are presenting their case for grievances or appeals. The support person is required to sign an Oath of Confidentiality.

- iii. Minutes will be taken by the Supervisor that outline the nature of the Grievance, the action taken, and the outcome. All parties are to sign the minutes.
 01. The minutes are then placed in each Employee's Personnel file with a copy given to each Employee and Supervisor.
- iv. If this does not resolve the grievance, then the employee(s) will submit their grievance to the Executive Director in writing within seven (7) working days.
 01. Upon receipt of the written grievance, the Executive Director will meet with the grieving Employee(s) within seven (7) working days, or at a mutually agreed time, to consider the grievance.
 02. If unresolved after the original meeting, the Executive Director will submit the grievance to the NWC FASD Executive, who will call a meeting to be attended by the grieving employee, and the Executive Director, within seven (7) working days, or at a mutually agreed upon time, to consider the grievance
 03. If the nature of the grievance regarding the employee has been confirmed, disciplinary action by the Leadership Team or the Executive Director, including, but not limited to, written reprimand, suspension or dismissal, will be taken within fifteen (15) working days of the day the Executive Team or Executive Director first became aware of, or reasonably should have been aware of the occurrence of the act. These timelines may be extended based on the necessity to complete a proper investigation.
 04. Employees are informed of their right to appeal a Grievance decision, should it not be to the satisfaction of either Employee.

4. Appeal Procedure



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- a. Appeals to Grievances must be made in writing, and are forwarded to the next level of supervision.
- b. The Employee must submit the formal written appeal within five (5) working days of the Grievance decision. An appeal includes a written description of events and the background pertaining to the unresolved situation. It must also include an assessment of the questioned decision or event, and suggested options for its resolution.
- c. The person responsible for addressing the appeal must acknowledge receipt of the appeal within five (5) working days.
- d. The person receiving the appeal will investigate the appeal, taking all previous information, plus any additional information into consideration. The decision for the appeal must be completed within 30 days of receiving the appeal.

5. Additional Appeals

Appeals may be repeated to the next level, up to the Leadership Team. The appeal may be heard by the Leadership Team or designated committee of the Leadership Team, at its discretion. The decision of the Leadership Team is final.

6. Supports

- a. Regardless of the outcome of a complaint made in good faith, the Employee lodging the complaint, as well as anyone providing information will be protected from any form of retaliation by either coworkers or supervisors. This includes dismissal, demotion, unwanted transfer, denial of opportunities within the Network, or harassment of an Employee as a result of their having made a complaint, or having provided evidence regarding a complaint.
- b. In all situations of alleged wrongdoing, the complainant and accused will be supported through the complaint, grievance and appeal process.

7. Confidentiality

All parties shall keep Employee complaints, grievances, and appeals strictly confidential. Violation of confidentiality is a performance issue and may be subject to disciplinary action. Any retaliation for filing a Grievance or Appeal is also an offence and subject to disciplinary action.



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8. Documentation

a. A record of outcomes for all formal Grievances and Appeals shall be sent to the Employees involved.

b. A copy of the outcomes will be maintained on the Employees' files.

Background information used to determine the outcomes, will be sealed and kept by the Executive Director at the Network office. The sealed information will be kept in accordance with the Personal Records Policy.