

SEPTEMBER 2015

CHECKLIST

Grievances



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This checklist outlines the steps to follow in circumstances where an employee raises a grievance about their employment or working condition. Whilst this checklist is intended to guide you through the process, each situation will be unique and you should, if you have any doubts or concerns, take further advice. This is of particular importance if the complaint is a whistleblowing matter or is a complaint of discrimination.

PREPARING TO CONDUCT A GRIEVANCE PROCESS

- Obtain and read the organisation's grievance procedure and ensure that this is followed in full.
- Do not delay. Deal with any grievance promptly and assure the employee who is raising the grievance that their concerns will be treated seriously.

INVESTIGATING THE GRIEVANCE

- Ensure that the handling of the complaint is impartial and unbiased. Arrange for an alternative person to hear the grievance if the person who should hear the grievance under the terms of the policy is personally involved.
- Examine the grievance which has been raised. Establish whether it can be resolved informally before following a formal procedure.
- Investigate the grievance thoroughly. Interview the employee raising the grievance, any witnesses or employees named in the grievance as appropriate.
- Consider the employee's personal file and training record to gain an overall picture.
- Ensure all notes taken and records made throughout the process are thorough and objective.

CONDUCTING THE GRIEVANCE HEARING

- Arrange for a grievance hearing to take place at a suitable private location. Arrange for an independent person to take notes at the hearing.
- Advise the employee of the arrangements for the hearing and of their right to be accompanied to that meeting. Confirm these details in writing.
- At the hearing introduce those present, explain the purpose of the meeting and how it will be conducted.
- Ask the employee to explain the grounds for their grievance.
- Allow the employee's companion to address the hearing and to ask questions to clarify issues. Understand that the companion is entitled to support the employee but that it is not their role to answer questions on the employee's behalf. They may, however, put the employee's case and respond to any view expressed at the hearing.
- Summarise the employee's case and seek their confirmation that it has been understood correctly.
- Explain the organisation's position acknowledge those points which are agreed and those in dispute.
- Discuss how the problem might be resolved.
- Consider whether any further investigation is required. Adjourn the meeting and, if necessary, carry out any further investigation. Consider the decision and any possible solutions. If the grievance has no basis then it should be rejected. If matters can be resolved, consider how to achieve this. If the grievance has substance but to implement the suggestions would be contrary to the organisation's policy take further advice.

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COMMUNICATING THE DECISION

- The decision should be communicated to the employee either in person, with confirmation in writing, or by way of letter. This communication should advise the employee of their right to appeal.
- Where appropriate, implement follow-up measures.
- Ensure all notes of the proceeding are collected and placed on the employee's personal file.

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