

The Grievance Procedure

Grievances are concerns, problems or complaints that employees raise with their employer. Grievances are outcomes form misinterpretation or misapplication of a written company policy or collectively bargained agreement.

A grievance procedure is seen as a means of internal dispute resolution by which an employee may have his or her grievances addressed.

The grievance handling process is not a legally binding process that must be followed by the employer and employee when raising or handling a grievance at work.

To address grievances, employers typically implement a grievance procedure.

The grievance procedure may also be part of a collective bargaining agreement, in which there are procedures for filing and resolving grievances

There are some principles that should be observed by both employer and employee in the handling of a grievance. These include fairness, justice,/ prompt settlement, due process, negotiations and bargaining.

Initial efforts should be directed at informally addressing workplace grievances informally, before resorting to the formal grievance procedure.

The aim of a grievance procedure is to encourage consistency, transparency and fairness in the handling of workplace problems or complaints. It should allow the employer to seek an informal resolution where appropriate but allow for more formal proceedings should the circumstances demand. **(Michael Corcoran)**

“It is not always who is right and who is wrong. But it is always what is right and what is wrong.” – Prof. M. S. Rao, Chief Consultant, MSR Leadership Consultants, India.
(“Grievance Handling Procedure” – Prof. M. S. Rao)

Objectives of the grievance handling procedure are as follows:

1. To enable the employee to air their grievance
2. To clarify the nature of the grievance
3. To investigate the reasons for dissatisfaction
4. To obtain, where possible, a speedy resolution to the problem
5. To take appropriate actions and ensure that promises are kept
6. To inform the employee of their right to take the grievance to the next stage of the procedure, in the event of an unsuccessful resolution

Benefits of Grievance Handling Procedure:

Benefits that accrue to both the employer and employees are as follows:

1. It encourages employees to raise concerns without fear of reprisal.
2. It provides a fair and speedy means of dealing with complaints.
3. It prevents minor disagreements developing into more serious disputes.
4. It serves as an outlet for employee frustrations and discontents.
5. It saves employer's time and money as solutions are found for workplace problems. It helps to build an organizational climate based on openness and trust.

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