

THE GRIEVANCE GUIDE





THE GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE

Grievance (gre'vans) **n. 1.a.** An actual or supposed circumstance regarded as just cause for protest. **b.** A complaint or protestation based on such circumstance. **2.** Indignation or resentment stemming from a feeling of having been wronged.

Given that we live and work in an imperfect world and we ourselves are wholly human, disagreements in the workplace are inevitable. Whether they develop into experiences where individuals “feel they have been wronged”, as in the definition above, has much to do with the communications environment we each work in. Our Staff Relations pamphlet states that “ A primary concern of the University is that people be treated fairly. ” A number of resources are offered to help employees solve work related problems.

Talking with your **supervisor** is suggested as the place to start. “Since open communication facilitates fair treatment, you are encouraged to ask questions and to offer opinions and suggestions. Discussion with your supervisor usually can solve problems that may develop and often leads to a better working relationship”¹. If that first step isn’t productive, an HR representative trained in employee relations is available to consult with. “Staff members can obtain information about university policies affecting their employment, requesting feedback about their particular situation and explore alternatives with the manager of employment and employee relations.”¹

Additional resources to help staff clarify work related issues and work at their solution are the **university ombudsman**, who coordinates the staff grievance procedure (x 8-2012), **counselors** available through the Employee Assistance Program (EAP) (PPC: 373-7080), the **compensation manager** for matters of job classification, wages and hours (x8-2048)

“When a work-related issue cannot be resolved through discussions between the individuals concerned, the staff member can file a grievance.”¹ “The grievance procedure deals with cases involving an individual staff member and applies to problems involving employment (e.g. hiring, salary, job classification, promotion, discipline, probation and termination); failure to apply university policy; or alleged discrimination in gender, race, color, religion, national origin, age, disability, veteran status, sexual orientation or marital status.”¹ “Staff members may have another university staff member or faculty member assist them in preparing a grievance statement or accompany them at any time during the grievance process.”¹

¹ Human Resources A-Guide – Staff Relations

**Staff
Council**

GRIEVANCE COMMITTEE

The Staff Council Grievance Committee is comprised of Carnegie Mellon University employees. This committee was founded to support and accompany staff members, who are investigating and/or participating in the grievance process at Carnegie Mellon.

We offer

- information about the grievance process
- supportive listening
- non-judgmental feedback
- note taking, during proceedings, for anyone anticipating or participating in the grievance process.

Our purpose is not to endorse either the grievant or the University, but rather to assist in a fair grievance process.

A grievant's right to privacy will be honored at all times.

Get more information about the Staff Council's Grievance Committee at <http://www.andrew.cmu.edu/~sc77/grieve.html>.



GRIEVANCE CHECKLIST

Exclusions:

- Still in 6-month provisional period. (Exception – Discrimination)
- Member of a Union
- Sexual Harassment? See Sexual Harassment Procedure.

Grievance Type:

- Employment
 - Hiring
 - Salary
 - Job Classification
 - Promotion
 - Discipline
 - Probation
 - Termination
- Failure to apply university policy
- Alleged discrimination
 - Gender
 - Race
 - Color
 - Religion
 - National Origin
 - Age
 - Disability
 - Veteran Status
 - Sexual Orientation
 - Marital Status

Procedure:

- Was there an attempt to resolve the issue through informal channels?
 - Did grievant talk with the individual concerned?
 - Did grievant talk to their supervisor?
 - Did the grievant talk with the Compensation Manager for matters of job classification, wages and hours?
 - Did the grievant contact the University Ombudsman for an informal discussion?
- More than one grievant? Each grievant must file a separate grievance.
- Submit written statement summarizing the issue to University Ombudsman normally within one month. Statement should include:
 - Grievance Statement** - A description of the work-related issue, including the policy or rule that the staff member alleges was violated, if applicable, and the name of the respondent. (Information about university policies and rules is available from a number of sources, including this guide, and on CMU's policy website (http://policy.andrew.cmu.edu/univ_policy/), and other administrative communications.)
 - Background** - A statement of the relevant facts supporting the staff member's position, including information about the impact the issue has had or is having on the staff member.
 - Requested Resolution** - A statement of what the staff member is requesting as a satisfactory resolution to the grievance.

Grievance Procedure Flow Chart

