

Standard Operating Procedure (SOP): Appeals and Grievance Process

This SOP defines the **appeals and grievance process**, outlining the procedures for employees or stakeholders to formally raise concerns or disputes. It covers the submission of grievances, the investigation and review steps, timelines for responses, roles and responsibilities of involved parties, confidentiality measures, and mechanisms for resolution or escalation. The objective is to ensure a fair, transparent, and efficient system that addresses issues promptly and promotes a respectful and supportive organizational environment.

1. Purpose

To establish a clear and transparent process for raising, investigating, and resolving appeals and grievances in a fair and timely manner.

2. Scope

This SOP applies to all employees, contractors, and stakeholders who wish to raise concerns or disputes within the organization.

3. Definitions

- **Grievance:** A formal complaint raised by an individual regarding workplace issues, misconduct, or unfair treatment.
- **Appeal:** A request to review, reconsider, or reverse a previous decision or action.
- **Complainant:** The individual submitting a grievance or appeal.
- **Respondent:** The individual(s) against whom the grievance or appeal is lodged.

4. Roles and Responsibilities

Role	Responsibility
Complainant	Submit grievances or appeals in writing and provide supporting evidence.
HR/Grievance Committee	Receive, log, and investigate grievances and appeals; ensure confidentiality and timely resolution.
Supervisor/Manager	Cooperate with investigations; implement resolutions as required.
Respondent	Participate in the process and provide necessary information.

5. Procedure

1. **Submission**
 - Complainant submits a formal written grievance or appeal to the designated HR representative or committee.
 - Grievance/Appeal must include facts, details, and supporting documentation.
2. **Acknowledgement**
 - Within 2 business days, HR acknowledges receipt in writing.
3. **Investigation**
 - HR or grievance committee conducts an impartial investigation within 10 business days.
 - Relevant parties may be interviewed and additional information collected if necessary.
4. **Review & Deliberation**
 - The committee reviews findings and determines if the grievance or appeal is substantiated.
 - Decision is documented with rationale.
5. **Communication of Outcome**
 - Decision and, if applicable, recommended resolution communicated in writing to all involved parties within 3 business days of conclusion.
6. **Resolution & Implementation**
 - If the grievance/appeal is upheld, agreed actions are implemented and monitored.
7. **Escalation**
 - If dissatisfied, the complainant may appeal to a higher authority (e.g., senior management) within 5 business days of the initial decision.

6. Timelines

Step	Timeframe
Acknowledgement of Submission	Within 2 business days
Investigation	Within 10 business days
Communication of Outcome	Within 3 business days after conclusion
Appeal/ Escalation Submission	Within 5 business days of decision

7. Confidentiality

- All records and communications are confidential and accessible only to those involved in the process.
- Retaliation against individuals who file grievances or appeals is strictly prohibited.

8. Review and Continuous Improvement

- This SOP will be reviewed annually to ensure continued relevance and effectiveness.
- Feedback from participants in the process will be considered for improvements.

9. Documentation

- Maintain a log of grievances and appeals, outcomes, dates, and actions taken for audit purposes.

Approved by: _____

Date: _____