

Contact of the following for advice

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This information is intended to be a brief introduction to the subject. Legal information is provided for



HUMAN RIGHTS CAPACITY BUILDING COMMITTEE

Human Rights Office
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Getting it Right

An employers guide to
Grievance Procedures

Sexual Harassment

Bullying

Problems

Disputes

Disciplinary

Discrimination

UNDERSTANDING GRIEVANCE PROCEDURES

What are the legal requirements?

An employee's Written Statement of Employment Particulars should include who an employee raises a grievance with and how this should be done.

The worker has the right to be accompanied at a grievance hearing.

Why should I have a grievance procedure?

Anybody working in an organisation may, at some time, have problems or concerns about their work, working conditions or relationships with colleagues that they wish to talk about with management. Issues that may cause grievances include:

- terms and conditions of employment
- health and safety
- work relations
- bullying and harassment
- new working practices
- working environment
- organisational change
- discrimination.

A procedure can help grievances to be handled in an open and fair way.

You may wish to have a separate procedure to deal with grievances of a sensitive nature,

HOW DO I GET IT RIGHT?

✓ Make sure everyone in your organization knows how a grievance should be raised and how your procedure operates.

✓ You should try to resolve grievances informally but where that is not possible use a formal grievance procedure under which:

- the employee sets out the nature of the grievance in writing
- the employer arranges a meeting to consider the grievance
- the employee is informed in writing what action is to be taken and how to appeal if not satisfied
- the employee is allowed to be accompanied at any grievance meeting.

✓ Train supervisors and managers how to deal with grievances.

WHAT IF I GET IT WRONG?

If grievances are not dealt with, or are handled badly, they are likely to grow and harm relationships in the workplace and this may lead to:

- resignations and the loss of good workers
- disciplinary problems
- a wider dispute with workers
- complaints to employment tribunals if employees feel their employment rights have not been respected and if they resign and claim a fundamental breach of contract amounting to 'constructive dismissal'
- unsatisfactory performance