WASHINGTON COLLEGE POLICIES

GRIEVANCE RESOLUTION PROCEDURE

Treating employees fairly is a key principle of the employment relationship and a productive workplace. When people work together, however, it is not unusual for conflicts or dissatisfaction to arise. If there is something about your job that is bothering you, we encourage you to take appropriate action to resolve concerns. This Grievance Resolution Procedure is designed to assist you. The Human Resources staff is available to assist when and where needed and appropriate.

Washington College encourages anyone who has experienced any form of discrimination or harassment, including sexual violence, to report the incident promptly, to seek all available assistance, and to pursue remedies available through the College’s Discrimination and Harassment Policies https://www.washcoll.edu/offices/human-resources/college-policies/discrimination-and-harassment-policies.php. This Grievance Resolution Procedure is used for work-related concerns other than alleged discrimination or harassment.

Problem-Solving Conversations

You are strongly encouraged to discuss any work-related problem with your supervisor or the person most directly involved with the problem you are confronting as soon as possible. Those persons can discuss your concerns with you in an effort to resolve the matter. If you are uncomfortable speaking with that individual, or if discussions do not resolve the issue, please arrange to talk with a member of the Human Resources Department for further assistance. The staff of the Human Resources Department is available to assist you in defining your concern and exploring alternative approaches for resolving your problem. Typically, many problems can be resolved through prompt conversations about the concern. Human Resources staff may recommend additional problem-solving processes including mediation.

Grievance Process

When work related concerns have not been resolved through Problem-Solving Conversations steps outlined above, and after consultation with Human Resources, the Grievance Process may be used. Only a current or former Washington College employee may bring forward a grievance complaint under this process. A grievance complaint is defined as an unresolved issue regarding an alleged misapplication or violation of College policy, practice, or procedure, other than harassment or discrimination. The Grievance Process may not be invoked as an alternative to other established procedures (e.g., regarding faculty tenure and promotion) and the following actions are not grievable: demotion without reduction in pay, suspension with pay, termination of a probationary employee during the introductory period.
**Step 1: Grievance Complaint and Response**

The charging employee must submit a written statement of the grievance complaint to the Director of Human Resources or designee. The written statement must identify the written policy, procedure or practice alleged to have been violated, the date of the event(s) on which the grievance complaint is based, and the relevant information, including the information which supports the employee’s position. Finally, the grievance complaint must propose a resolution to the problem. Human Resources staff is available to assist employees in the preparation of a written grievance. Grievance complaints ordinarily should be filed no later than 180 calendar days after the event or action that is the subject of the grievance.

If the Director of Human Resources determines that the matter raised in the grievance complaint does not fit the definition of a grievance or that appropriate problem-solving conversations have not been attempted prior to filing a grievance complaint, as defined above, the charging employee will be notified of such and the grievance process will be concluded. A charging employee may appeal a decision of the Director of Human Resources to the Chief of Staff.

The respondent (i.e., the person whose action is the subject of the grievance), after consulting with his or her department head and Human Resources staff, will submit a written answer to the grievance complaint, normally within fifteen (15) working days after the receipt of the grievance complaint, and at the same time submit a copy to the Director of Human Resources. If the response is not satisfactory to the charging employee, she/he will inform Human Resources staff to proceed to Step 2.

**Step 2: Request for Review**

Within five (5) working days after receipt of the Step 1 response, the charging employee must submit a written statement to the Director of Human Resources explaining the reasons why he or she is appealing the Step 1 response. The Director of Human Resources will then appoint a grievance panel selected from among the members of the College’s Discrimination and Dispute Review Committee (DDRC), which is appointed by the President in consultation with Staff Council and Administrative Council. The grievance panel will consist of three members of the DDRC and is facilitated by the Director of Human Resources (or designee) for complaints against staff members or Provost (or designee) for complaints against faculty. Hearings where there is a staff Respondent will include two staff members and one faculty member on the hearing panel. Hearings where there is a faculty Respondent will include two faculty members and one staff member on the hearing panel. The DDRC will continue to function whenever the College is open even if classes are not in session.

At the hearing, the charging employee and the respondent may present statements and also present witnesses and materials in support of his/her position. Any employee who participates in the
hearing, whether on his/her own behalf or for a co-worker, will not be subject to retaliatory action. Within 15 days after the hearing, the Grievance Panel will issue a written report that includes a review of the information relevant to the case, findings, and recommendations. The report will be shared with the charging employee and the respondent and forwarded to the President.

The President will review the report and may accept, reject, or modify the conclusions and recommendations of the Grievance Committee. The President will forward a written answer to the charging employee, the respondent, and the Director of Human Resources. The decision of the President is final.

3. Time Limits
The time limits included in this procedure are designed to support a speedy resolution while providing sufficient time to prepare and present information. Scheduling constraints may impact the time limits and as a result the College, at its discretion, may modify the time limits.

If the College does not extend time limits and an employee does not observe the time limits in any particular step, the grievance will be considered to be ended.

4. Disclaimer
This policy shall not be construed as a contract of employment, and it is subject to change by the college in its discretion without prior notice to employees, as the College deems appropriate.

5. Confidentiality
All parties involved, especially those charged with carrying out the above policies, are expected to maintain confidentiality to the greatest extent practicable. Records pertaining to grievance complaints will be maintained in the Office of Human Resources for three years after the resolution of the complaint, at which time the records will be destroyed. Records regarding any sanctions imposed will be maintained in accordance with normal personnel records policies, as applicable.