

Section X. Procedure for Grievances

Introduction

Grievance is defined as an employee's claim of misapplication or misinterpretation of terms of the employee's job description or alleged violation of established personnel policies at the local or diocesan level.

In order for this policy to work, each employee and supervisor must embrace it in good faith, cooperate and participate in the process. The purpose of the Grievance Procedure is to give each employee the opportunity to resolve any grievance. The employee may have a representative present at any step of the grievance procedure.

These procedures are the only method of resolving grievances that cannot be resolved informally. If the employee has a grievance that cannot be informally resolved, the employee is expected to utilize this procedure. If the employee fails to exercise this procedure or bypasses it in any way, any future consideration of that grievance may be denied and the opportunity to pursue it may be forfeited.

A. Grievances

1. The Diocese of Brownsville strives to maintain a Christian working environment for everybody, to promptly resolve employee concerns, and to protect lay church employees as defined in Section II, letter A., number 8.
2. The Diocese encourages employees who have a grievance to talk it over with their immediate supervisor. If the grievance involves the immediate supervisor, the employee must go to the next-higher-level supervisor. The employee may meet with the Diocesan Director of Human Resources to discuss it. The Diocesan Director of Human Resources will decide if the grievance is one that should first be redirected back to the supervisor. Talking things over usually helps. If not, the employee may wish to file a formal grievance and go through the Grievance Procedure. Under this Grievance Procedure, the grievance must be in writing, giving specific details about any event, condition, rule or practice about which the employee has a grievance.
3. When an employee has a grievance the immediate supervisor is the person to see first. However, if the grievance is of such a nature that resolution would be hampered by the grievance process, the Diocesan Director of Human Resources may take the appropriate action to resolve it. In either case, the grievance must be presented in writing within ten (10) working days of the occurrence upon which the grievance is based.
4. The employee may have a representative present at any step of the grievance procedure provided that any other party involved is notified two (2) working days prior to the intended meeting and provided that the identity of the representative is indicated. Once notified that the grieving person will have a representative any other party involved may also seek to have a representative present.
5. In order to provide for prompt and efficient evaluation of and response to grievances, the Diocese has established a formal Grievance Procedure for all lay church employees. No retaliation will be taken against any employee because he/she reports a problem in good faith.

When the formal grievance procedure is initiated, the following steps must be taken:

First Step

SEE THE IMMEDIATE SUPERVISOR.

If the employee has a grievance he/she must request an appointment to discuss the matter confidentially. The immediate supervisor is to grant an appointment within fifteen (15) working days of receiving notification of the grievance from the employee. If the discussion does not lead to a satisfactory conclusion within fifteen (15) working days of the meeting with the immediate supervisor, the employee may proceed to the next step. If the grievance is about the immediate supervisor, the employee should go to the next-higher-level supervisor.

Second Step

PUT IT IN WRITING and GIVE TO IMMEDIATE SUPERVISOR.

If talking with the immediate supervisor did not solve the grievance, the employee is to put the grievance in writing (see attached form). Anonymous grievances will not be addressed. Often, in order to investigate grievances, further follow-up is needed, thus contacting the grieving individual may be necessary. If, within fifteen (15) working days, the supervisor cannot resolve the grievance to the employee=s satisfaction, he/she may appeal to Diocesan Director of Human Resources.

Third Step

GIVE GRIEVANCE TO THE DIOCESAN DIRECTOR OF HUMAN RESOURCES.

If the grievance is against the immediate supervisor or if after discussions with the employee, the situation remains unsettled, the matter should be referred to the Diocesan Director of Human Resources. The employee may be required to elaborate the grievance by naming witnesses, mentioning times, dates and places of occurrences, etc. The supervisor will prepare a summary of the communications with the employee on the subject, and place it in a sealed envelope and deliver it to the Diocesan Director of Human Resources.

Fourth Step

GRIEVANCE CONFERENCE.

Within fifteen (15) working days of receiving the grievance the Diocesan Director of Human Resources will schedule an appointment with the employee in question. The Diocesan Director of Human Resources may invite whomever he/she thinks needs to participate in the discussions. At this conference, the employee is free to openly discuss the grievance and substantiate the reasons for feeling the way he/she does. The Diocesan Director of Human Resources will consider the employee=s input and render a decision in writing within fifteen (15) working days. The decision of the Diocesan Director of Human Resources is final and binding.

DIOCESE OF BROWNSVILLE

GRIEVANCE FORM

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DATE:

EMPLOYEE NAME/POSITION:

SUPERVISOR NAME/POSITION:

WORK LOCATION:

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STEP 1

EMPLOYEE STATEMENT:

(Describe basis of your grievance. Include names, dates, and all information supporting your grievance, etc.)

EMPLOYEE PROPOSED RESOLUTION:

(Provide at least two options for resolving your grievance that are acceptable to you.)

SUPERVISOR STATEMENT:

(Describe your response, proposed resolution (if different from employee=s) and outcome of meeting.)

STEP 2

EMPLOYEE APPEAL:

(Describe your response to supervisor and what part of supervisor=s proposed resolution is acceptable and what part is not and submit all materials, including grievance, to the Diocesan Director of Human Resources).

DETERMINATION:

By _____

Date _____