STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURE

Employee Grievance SOP

Document no.	SOP-HR-005
Revision	1.0
Owner	HR Director
Effective date	September 15, 2026
Review cycle	Every 12 months

1. Purpose

To give employees a clear, confidential way to raise workplace concerns and to make sure every grievance is investigated fairly, resolved on the facts, and documented.

2. Scope

Applies to formal grievances about workplace conduct, treatment or working conditions raised by any employee. Handled per company policy, the employee handbook and local employment law, with legal counsel involved where appropriate.

Definitions

Grievance	A formal complaint raised by an employee about workplace conduct, treatment or conditions.
Investigator	The person, usually from HR, assigned to gather facts and recommend an outcome for a grievance.
Retaliation	Any negative treatment of an employee because they raised or took part in a grievance, which is not permitted under company policy.

3. Responsibilities

Employee	Raises the grievance with relevant facts and takes part in the investigation in good faith.
Manager	Supports the process, avoids any appearance of retaliation, and implements agreed changes after resolution.
HR Generalist	Logs the grievance, coordinates the investigation and communicates the outcome.
Investigator	Gathers facts, interviews relevant parties and recommends a resolution based on the evidence.

RACI matrix

Activity	Employee	Manager	HR Generalist	Investigator
Submit the grievance	R/A	I	I	-
Log and acknowledge the grievance	I	-	R/A	I
Investigate and gather facts	C	C	A	R
Decide and communicate the	I	I	R/A	C

Activity	Employee	Manager	HR Generalist	Investigator
outcome				
Monitor for retaliation after closure	C	R	A	-

R = Responsible, A = Accountable, C = Consulted, I = Informed

4. Materials and PPE

Materials, tools and systems

- Grievance intake form
- HRIS or case management log
- Interview notes template
- Employee handbook and grievance policy
- Outcome letter template

5. Procedure

Step	Task	Owner	Done
5.1	**Receive the grievance** The employee submits the grievance in writing using the intake form, or verbally to HR, describing the issue, the people involved and the outcome they are seeking.	Employee	☐
5.2	**Log and acknowledge the grievance** The HR generalist logs the grievance in the case management system and acknowledges receipt to the employee within the timeframe set by policy. **Checkpoint:** Every grievance is logged with a case number, even if it is resolved informally later.	HR Generalist	☐
5.3	**Assign an investigator** HR assigns an investigator with no direct involvement in the issue, escalating to an external investigator or legal counsel if the complaint involves senior leaders or a conflict of interest. **Checkpoint:** The assigned investigator has no reporting relationship to or direct involvement with anyone named in the grievance.	HR Generalist	☐
5.4	**Plan the investigation** The investigator reviews the complaint, identifies who needs to be interviewed and what records are relevant, and sets an expected timeline.	Investigator	☐
5.5	**Interview the parties involved** The investigator interviews the employee who raised the grievance, the person or people named, and any witnesses, documenting each conversation in writing. **Warning:** Keep the details of the grievance confidential and share them only with people who need to know to investigate it.	Investigator	☐
5.6	**Review evidence and reach a finding** The investigator reviews all interview notes and supporting documents and writes a factual summary with a recommended finding for HR to review.	Investigator	☐

Step	Task	Owner	Done
5.7	**Decide the outcome** HR reviews the investigator's findings and decides the outcome, which may include corrective action following the disciplinary SOP, involving legal counsel where the situation warrants it. **Checkpoint:** The outcome is supported by the documented findings, not by assumptions.	HR Generalist	☐
5.8	**Communicate the outcome** The HR generalist meets with the employee who raised the grievance to communicate the outcome and, separately, informs any other affected party as appropriate.	HR Generalist	☐
5.9	**Offer an appeal** If the employee disagrees with the outcome, they can request a review by a more senior HR or business leader who was not involved in the original decision, per the grievance policy.	Employee	☐
5.10	**Close and file the case** The HR generalist closes the case in the log, files all documentation, and retains it per your records retention policy and local law.	HR Generalist	☐
5.11	**Monitor for retaliation** The manager and HR check in with the employee who raised the grievance over the following weeks to confirm there is no negative treatment linked to the complaint.	Manager	☐

6. Quality checks

- Every grievance is logged with a case number and acknowledgment date.
- Investigators have no direct involvement in the issue being investigated.
- Outcomes reference specific findings rather than general impressions.
- Follow-up checks for retaliation are documented after every case.

7. Records

- Grievance intake form
- Investigation notes and interview summaries
- Outcome letter
- Appeal request and decision, if applicable

8. KPIs

- Average time from grievance to resolution
- Percentage of grievances acknowledged within the policy timeframe
- Percentage of cases with a documented retaliation check
- Repeat grievance rate involving the same parties

9. Common mistakes

- Letting the employee's manager investigate a grievance about themselves.
- Discussing the grievance with people who do not need to know.
- Closing a case without a documented finding.
- Skipping the retaliation check-in after the case is closed.

10. Revision history

Revision	Date	Description	Reviewed by
1.0	September 15, 2026	Initial release	Alexa Uskova

Approval

Prepared by	Approved by	Date

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