

# Grievance Procedure for Employees and Volunteers

*Reviewed by Trustees 21/11/16*

## **Purpose**

Anybody working in an organisation, whether as an employee or as a volunteer, may have problems or concerns about their work. Issues arising may include the following:

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

The aim of the CCF Grievance Procedure is to outline a process which will support a constructive response to such sensitive or contentious issues, so as to contribute to a culture of mutual respect and lead to positive ways forward. The sections which follow outline the various options and stages for dealing with a grievance or serious concern.

## **Stage 1: Informal resolution through discussion or a mediation meeting**

If you have a grievance or serious concern you should not hesitate to discuss this with the person who supervises your work/volunteer role or with the Coordinator of CCF. In practice, identifying an issue and taking the time to talk it through, frequently brings a resolution. Discussion can also help you clarify whether the issue is one that should be acted upon immediately or whether it is rather one which should be kept under review.

If for any reason you feel it would be helpful to involve a third person, there is also the option for you and whoever supervises your work to arrange an informal mediation meeting together with some third person within CCF. The aim of this meeting would be to come to a better understanding of the issue, to clarify any miscommunication, to seek a resolution of the issue before or instead of moving to a more formal stage in the procedure.

## **Stage 2: Grievance Meeting**

If informal procedures fail to resolve the difficulty or you feel that a meeting is needed to look at your grievance or serious concern in a more formal way, you should set out the issues in a letter to the Coordinator (or to the Chair of the CCF Board of Trustees, or to another Trustee, if either of those options seems more appropriate to you), asking them to arrange such a meeting. This meeting between you and the Coordinator (or you and the Chair of Trustees, or you and the other Trustee) should take as soon as possible, ideally within five days.

The Grievance Meeting will be held in private, and the Coordinator, or Chair or Trustee conducting the meeting, will treat any information disclosed by you respectfully, with agreement as to confidentiality. You may bring someone with you to support you at the

meeting. If you wish to do this, please let the person conducting the meeting know in advance. Either you, or the person conducting the meeting, may suggest an adjournment if further time, consideration or information is needed.

Although the person conducting the meeting may respond directly to your grievance or serious concern, it is more likely they will need time afterwards to reflect on what has been said, and perhaps to make further enquiries. They should write to you with a response within seven days, or contact you to explain if they need more time than this. The response letter should include a summary of the discussion which has taken place, and any action proposed to resolve your grievance or serious concern.

You will be asked to make a written reply to this letter within seven days of receipt, or to let the person who conducted the meeting know if you need more time before responding. In your written reply, you should say whether you are satisfied with the response, or whether you wish to appeal. In the event that you are satisfied with the response, you may wish to make a date to review matters with the person who conducted the meeting, to ensure that the issue has been fully and satisfactorily resolved.

### **Stage 3: Appeal Meeting**

If you are dissatisfied with the Grievance Meeting, or with the written response, you can request a further meeting to hear an appeal. The request for an Appeal Meeting should be made in writing to the Coordinator of CCF, or the Chair of the Board of Trustees or another Trustee, as you think appropriate. You may wish to amend or rewrite the original letter outlining your concerns, in which case you should send the new letter to the person conducting the Appeal Meeting with sufficient time for them to consider your concerns in detail beforehand. The time frame and conditions for holding the Appeal Meeting are the same as for the Grievance Meeting. The person conducting the Appeal Meeting should write to you as soon as possible after the meeting with a summary of discussion and any plan of action to resolve the matter.

This is the final stage of the CCF Grievance and Serious Concerns Procedure for employees and volunteers.