



## Employee Grievance Policy

### POLICY

It is the policy of Full Life that all employees and volunteers have access to an effective means of expressing and resolving any grievances, and that those grievances are handled in a manner that is timely and respectful. Each employee and volunteer will be provided with a copy of the Grievance Policy and Procedure during employee orientation and at any time such is requested.

### PROCEDURE

The purpose of the Employee/Volunteer Grievance Procedure is to ensure fair and equitable treatment of all employees and to resolve problems so that constructive work relationships can be maintained for the benefit of all. Every effort shall be made to resolve all problems informally with the parties involved. An employee or volunteer may discuss informally, without resort to formal procedures, any problem relating to conditions of work with her/his supervisor, who will then address these concerns.

If an employee has a problem related to his or her supervisor, s/he may bring in a witness to discuss these issues or request the involvement of the supervisor's supervisor. Any issues raised by supervisees of the Executive Director may be brought to the attention of the President of the Board of Directors.

In the event that informal efforts to resolve disputes are unsuccessful, however, or if the grievance is against one's supervisor, employees and volunteers may seek resolution through the following grievance procedures:

**Step 1:** Written presentation of the grievance to the immediate supervisor using the Full Life Grievance Form. Only the person filing the grievance may do so; an employee may not file a grievance on behalf of someone else.

1. Within three (3) working days (Monday-Friday) of an unsuccessful attempt to informally resolve the matter with one's supervisor, the employee presents her/his signed grievance to the immediate supervisor. Grievances without the FULL LIFE Grievance Form and, if applicable, written documentation and/or evidence, will not be considered, nor will e-mails, anonymous submissions, or unsubstantiated rumors or third party hearsay, as these are not considered evidence. Grievances against the Executive Director are submitted to the President of the Board of Directors.

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2. The immediate supervisor writes the official response to the employee/volunteer on the FULL LIFE Grievance Form within two (2) working days. If the written response is sufficient, the employees involved sign the Grievance Form, the matter is considered officially resolved, and the Form is submitted to the Executive Director. If the written response is not sufficient, the employee may follow Step 2 below.
  
3. If an Grievance Report is written and submitted to the Executive Director, she may determine that an investigation into the grievance is warranted. Due to legal, ethical, or safety circumstances, employees may be placed on paid administrative leave while the investigation is conducted. This is not considered disciplinary action. Investigations are to be conducted expeditiously and be complete in no more than 5 working days. The Executive Director will write on the FULL LIFE Grievance Form the official results of the investigation. Should the investigation remain unresolved after 5 days, the FULL LIFE Management Team will convene immediately to appoint a neutral professional from an agency-determined community mediation source according to Step 2.2 below).

**Step 2:** If the situation remains unresolved, the employee/volunteer submits the FULL LIFE Grievance Form and accompanying documentation to the Executive Director. The employee/volunteer may bring a support person of his/her choosing to discuss this with the Executive Director.

1. Within three (3) working days of the supervisor's written response, the Executive Director will establish a meeting with the employee/volunteer and the supervisor to act as conciliator. The Division Director will assist the parties by helping to establish communication, clarify misconceptions, deal with strong emotions and build the necessary trust for cooperative problem-solving.
  
2. In the event that the situation is not resolved through a conciliation meeting with the Executive Director, the Management Team will be convened immediately to appoint a neutral professional from an agency-determined community mediation source who will attempt to facilitate a mutually agreeable resolution (see Step 3 below). The neutral party must not have participated in any previous decisions concerning the issue in dispute.

**Step 3: Binding Arbitration:** The mediator will meet with all parties involved, the Supervisor, and the Executive Director. An appointed Board member may sit in on the arbitration meeting as an observer but not participant. The goal of the grievance resolution meeting will be to produce an outcome that is acceptable to all parties within 10 working days of receipt of the grievance.

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The mediator's decision will be binding and communicated directly to all parties involved. The costs for arbitration will be paid in full by the agency.

1. The Board of Directors will be informed of the outcome of the mediation/arbitration process.

Confidentiality is to be maintained regarding anyone involved in filing or reviewing a grievance process. This policy prohibits the airing of grievances to uninvolved persons or the community while the parties are employed by or volunteering for the agency. Violation of this policy is cause for disciplinary action.

As grievances reflect an important problem-solving process, the FULL LIFE policy is that employees who report grievances in good faith will not be subject to any form of retaliation by other employees, including harassment, disciplinary action, or termination. If any employee feels that s/he is the target of retaliation in violation of this policy, the employee should immediately report the problem to the Executive Director.

If action is not taken at any step within the time limits prescribed in the Procedure, the employee/volunteer shall have the right to proceed to the next step. Failure of the employee/volunteer to comply with any of the steps or time limits shall constitute a waiver of the grievance by the employee/volunteer.

This grievance procedure is applicable only to persons who initiated the procedure while an employee/volunteer of the agency. The Grievance Form will go into the FULL LIFE personnel file of all parties involved.