



HUMAN HABITATS

GRIEVANCE POLICY

Administrative Policy

November 2024

Policy Summary

Policy Name:	HH Grievance Policy
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Attributable to:	All Staff
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The Company and management recognise that the at times staff will have a grievance. This policy aims to make it clear what to do if you have a workplace concern, or a grievance about any act, policy, omission, situation or decision that you think is unfair.

Our aim is to deal with any complaint seriously, impartially, quickly, fairly and as confidentially as possible. We will do our best to ensure that you are not victimised in any way for lodging a complaint, involvement in the investigation or a complaint, or for supporting someone else's complaint.

What to do if you have a grievance

Informal Process

Always as a first step we encourage you to address your grievance directly with those that have influence over or are directly attributable to your grievance. It is expected that trivial or minor disputes will be resolved by employees without undue need for a formal process (including management involvement). Employees are expected to use their judgment when seeking a formal grievance resolution process.

An informal grievance process involves a staff member (the complainant) seeking to resolve a grievance they have with someone else in the Company (respondent) by themselves, or with the help of an appropriate Manager (Performance Manager, the Personnel Director, the Office Manager, or the CEO).

This Policy expects that staff will use common sense in ensuring complaints are directed to the appropriate Manager. Where there is an allegation of bullying or harassment the complainant may choose not to be directly involved in raising the issue with the respondent and seek to go above their performance manager to address a concern. Conversely, where the matter relates to conditions of work, such as workload, it is entirely appropriate to go direct to a Client Manager or Performance Manager (as the respondent).

An informal process is appropriate in some circumstances, including where:

- the complainant wishes to deal with the matter informally;
- the complaint is relatively minor in nature;
- the respondent has no recorded history of engaging in conduct of the kind alleged by the complainant; and/or
- the respondent does not deny the substance of the allegation.

Outcomes from an informal process may include, but are not limited to:

- an acknowledgement and apology by the respondent;
- an agreement by the respondent to undertake training or coaching;
- the change or development of a policy or practice; and/or
- a change in behaviour by the respondent, as directed.

A successful outcome to an informal grievance process consists of all parties having had an opportunity to present their story, along with consensus by all on the decisions made and any provisions for resolution of the grievance. Where applicable, the parties should feel capable of continuing to work together in a professional capacity.



Finally, regardless that a complainant may wish to deal with an issue informally, HH may determine that the matter must be dealt with in a formal process. This is especially so where it is a serious allegation or there is a history of complaints against the respondent.

Formal Process

A formal process involves the complainant making the complaint to a Manager without first speaking directly with the respondent, or if the Manager determines that a formal process is appropriate in the circumstances. The Manager will initiate a formal grievance process if it is appropriate in all the circumstances. If it is not appropriate for an employee to inform their manager about the complaint or grievance, the employee should raise this with Andrew Lanarus or Ryan O'Sullivan.

A formal grievance process is appropriate where:

- a. it would be inappropriate to deal with the matter informally;
- b. the allegations are serious;
- c. an informal process has not resolved the complaint (however an informal process is not necessarily required before a formal investigation commences); and/or
- d. there is a history of complaints against the respondent.

Once a formal process has commenced, the relevant manager (or other senior employee as nominated by Human Habitats) will meet with the complainant. The manager or other senior employee may suggest options for resolving the grievance or consult with such other persons as it considers necessary in an attempt to promptly resolve the grievance.

The manager or other senior employee may take any steps deemed necessary or likely to be useful in attempting to resolve the grievance, including but not limited to:

- a. requiring the affected employee to detail their grievance in writing, including outlining specific details / facts or allegations on which the grievance is based and any remedy being sought;
- b. meet with the affected employee and any other person directly involved in the grievance;
- c. provide any parties involved in the grievance with a reasonable opportunity to provide information or documents relevant to the grievance;
- d. take any steps / action necessary to fully understand the particulars of the grievance;
- e. where appropriate, seek external advice or opinion in relation to the grievance;
- f. if considered appropriate in the circumstances, provide the affected employee and any other persons directly involved in the dispute with an opportunity to consider and respond to relevant information provided by any other party to the grievance;
- g. discuss with the parties to the grievance options for resolution;
- h. make findings in response to the grievance; and/or
- i. take such action to resolve the grievance as considered to be reasonable and appropriate in the circumstances, including by consulting with other members of management or making recommendations for disciplinary or other action.

A respondent or other employee who is directed to participate in an interview or meeting to discuss a complaint or grievance under this policy may request to have a support person present during the meeting. Human Habitats will not unreasonably refuse a request for a support person.

Outcomes from a formal process may include, but are not limited to:

- a. an acknowledgement and apology by the respondent;
- b. changes in office seating or work arrangements, such as reporting lines or work responsibilities
- c. a change in behaviour by the respondent, as directed; and/or
- d. disciplinary action, which may include written warnings or termination of employment if appropriate.

Where applicable, Human Habitats may be required to, and reserves the right to, escalate any complaint made or conduct investigated under this Policy to an external body, such as the Police.



Employees who raise a grievance or complaint in accordance with this Policy are not entitled to be informed of the outcome of their grievance, including whether any disciplinary action / or other action was taken to resolve the grievance or complaint.

The Manager must also take sufficient notes to document all discussions, developments, and outline the reasons for any decisions made.

At all formal meetings, the Manager will endeavour to ensure a third-party Manager is in attendance. If there is not one available, any party may request a rescheduling.

Confidentiality

Complaints will be dealt with seriously, impartially, quickly and fairly. In order for us to deal with a complaint, it may not be possible for the complainant to remain anonymous however we will maintain confidentiality as far as reasonably possible and liaise with the complainant regarding the potential for the matter not to remain confidential.

Employees who have a raise a complaint or grievance in accordance with this Policy, or who are involved in a complaint / grievance procedure, should not discuss this with other employees or persons within or outside the workplace other than in accordance with this Policy. Employees should keep matters raised or discussed during the grievance resolution procedure confidential.

Inappropriate discussion of grievances outside the grievance procedure may be harmful to working relationships and Human Habitats. It may result in disciplinary action being taken against the employee(s) involved, including termination of employment.

Nothing in this Policy is intended to limit or detract from any right of Human Habitats or its employee/s to obtain confidential legal or other advice from external advisors, or to exercise legal rights which they otherwise have to seek external resolution of a workplace grievance.

Any documentation associated with a grievance will be kept in confidential files, which will be separate to the personnel files of both the complainant and respondent.

Grievance information will only be placed in a personnel file where the complaint results in disciplinary action,.

Outcomes

Informal Process

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- h. a change in behaviour by the respondent, as directed.

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- disciplinary action, which may include written warnings or the summary dismissal if appropriate.



Frivolous and/or vexatious complaints

Any employees who lodge a grievance are expected to cooperate with the process and provide evidence where possible.

If the Company determines that a complaint or grievance is frivolous, vexatious, misconceived, dishonestly made or lacking in substance, disciplinary action may be taken, up to and including termination of employment.

We encourage staff to speak up if they believe they have a legitimate grievance or complaint. We will do our best to ensure that you are not victimised in any way for lodging a genuine complaint, being involved in the investigation process, or for supporting someone else's complaint.