

GRIEVANCE POLICY

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1. POLICY OVERVIEW

It is in the best interest of Heckerbella Limited and its Employees that grievances are addressed fairly and as quickly as possible. This policy defines how grievance will be treated in Heckerbella Limited. This will ensure that grievances are brought to the attention of the relevant level of supervision or management for speedy resolution.

Grievance is defined as any complaint or concern over the administration or interpretation of any written contract in which the worker is involved. Grievance includes any feeling of victimization, injustice, concerns, problems and other forms of dissatisfaction. Informal discussion and resolution are the preferred way of addressing grievances. Therefore, Employees should take up their feelings of dissatisfaction verbally with their immediate superior.

2. SCOPE

This policy applies to all Full Time Employees and Contract Employees of Heckerbella Limited. The policy covers aspects required by labour legislations within Nigeria and is based on principles derived from best practices.

3. PURPOSE

This document deals with the way Employees' grievances are handled and resolved to foster good working relationship among the Employee and with Heckerbella Limited Management. The purpose of this policy is to ensure the following:

- 3.1. Protection of the company's core values and culture.
- 3.2. Prompt response to Employees' grievance in order to keep a motivated team.
- 3.3. Compliance with the principles of fairness, equity and natural justice
- 3.4. Provision of a system for disciplinary action consistent with the principles of Employee relations practices.
- 3.5. Strengthening the company's internal control mechanism; and
- 3.6. Prompt investigation and timely resolution of grievance cases

4. POLICY STATEMENT

Employees are free to lodge grievances in terms of this procedure. No-one (1) will be victimised or prejudiced as a result of using the procedure. Where grievance has been lodged and the grievance procedure is being followed, the person(s) dealing with the grievance will be given a fair opportunity to try and resolve the grievance. The Employee(s) who raised the grievance shall not take other steps (for example, industrial action such as go-slows or refusal to work overtime) while the procedure is in progress.

5. POLICY GUIDELINES

- 5.1. Employees who handle grievances procedure must attempt to find solutions to the grievances. Their role is not in the first place to decide who is right or wrong, but rather to get the parties involved in the grievance to see and understand each other's position and where justified, to move to mutually acceptable solutions. If this proves to be impossible, the person handling the grievance will state his or her view and return the grievance form to the Employee.

- 5.2. Employees are to focus on the grievance and the possible ways of resolving it. Any unrelated issues that may come up in the process are to be dealt with afterwards, if required.
- 5.3. Employees are required to be familiar with the contents of this policy document as ignorance of any of its provisions will not be accepted as a justifiable excuse in cases of violation.
- 5.4. The grievance procedure should not be used in response to disciplinary action taken against an Employee. The disciplinary procedure allows for appeals against or reviews of disciplinary action.
- 5.5. The lodging of a grievance shall also not prevent or delay disciplinary action being taken against an Employee.

6. STAGES OF GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE

6.1. Reporting levels

No reporting level must be skipped during the procedure, unless the grievance is against the person at that level, in which case the person must be advised that the grievance is being referred to his or her superior.

6.2. Informal grievance discussion

An Employee who feels aggrieved, must discuss the matter with his or her immediate superior, to try to resolve it. This is not part of the formal grievance procedure but is an important opportunity to find a mutually acceptable resolution and to avoid the formal grievance process.

- 6.3. The immediate superior should attempt to resolve the Employee's dissatisfaction without delay but should be given a reasonable period to do so. After five (5) working days without a satisfactory resolution by the immediate superior, the Employee will proceed to the formal grievance procedure.

- 6.4. Voluntary conciliation is useful in dealing with complaints involving interpersonal relationships, including allegations of harassment. The process involves the voluntary participation of the involved parties to reconcile the grievance.

6.5. Grievance form

The grievance form belongs to the Employee who initiates the grievance. The Employee should ensure that it is completed as required at each stage. If it is referred to the next stage, it is the Employee's responsibility to see that it reaches the right person. A photocopy may be made and kept by the Employee at each stage. Should more space be required in any section of the form, additional notes may be attached to the form. Copies of documents that relate to or clarify the grievance may be attached to the grievance form.

7. GRIEVANCE HANDLING PROCEDURES

7.1. Stage One (1)

7.1.1. Immediate Superior

If the informal stage has failed to resolve the dissatisfaction, the Employee may formally, and within ten (10) working days, lodge a grievance by:

- 7.1.1.1. completing the grievance form
- 7.1.1.2. recording the relevant facts and describing why it causes dissatisfaction
- 7.1.1.3. describing a logical, reasonable and practical way of resolving the grievance
- 7.1.1.4. attaching relevant documents
- 7.1.1.5. signing the grievance form
- 7.1.1.6. Submitting the grievance form to his or her immediate superior.

7.1.2. On receipt of the grievance form, the immediate superior should again investigate the circumstances giving rise to the grievance and arrange a grievance meeting with the Employee. The grievance meeting may include other persons who are implicated or who may assist in resolving the grievance.

- 7.1.2.1. The meeting, under the guidance of the superior handling the grievance, should actively explore ways of resolving the grievance. If it is not practical or acceptable to do what the Employee has proposed as a resolution, other alternatives must be considered and discussed.
- 7.1.2.2. If an acceptable way of resolving the grievance is found at the meeting, the immediate superior should record the details thereof and indicate who is responsible for implementation of the resolution as well as dates for completion, if applicable. The parties concerned must ensure that the solution is implemented as stated.
- 7.1.2.3. Should the grievance meeting fail to find an acceptable solution, the Employee may agree to allow a further period for the immediate superior to attempt to resolve the grievance, which period will be agreed between the Employee and the immediate superior. If no solution is found, the superior will record the outcome of **Stage One (1)** on the grievance form, state the reasons why the grievance remains unresolved.

7.2. **Stage Two (2)**

7.2.1. Next organisational level

If the grievance remains unresolved after stage one (1), the Employee may proceed to stage two (2) of the procedure. The grievance form and any relevant supporting documentation should be forwarded by the Employee within five (5) working days to the next superior supervisor or manager, that is, the direct superior of the person who dealt with the grievance at stage one (1). On receipt, the person responsible for dealing with the grievance at stage two (2) must:

- 7.2.1.1. review the attempts made to resolve the grievance at stage one (1);
- 7.2.1.2. consider whether he or she may be able to resolve the grievance at a further grievance meeting. If so, a further grievance meeting is to be held.
- 7.2.1.3. the purpose and format of such a meeting will be the same as that of the meeting held at stage one (1).
- 7.2.1.4. If a further grievance meeting is not required or if the grievance meeting failed to resolve the grievance, the person considering the grievance shall state why the grievance could not be resolved, record his or her views on the grievance form and return the form to the Employee.

7.3. **Stage Three (3)**

If the grievance remains unresolved after stage two (2) and provided that stage two (2) was not dealt with at a more senior manager or director level, the Employee may within ten (10) working days refer the grievance to the next organizational level, that is, the direct superior of the person who dealt with the grievance at stage two (2). (If stage two (2) had been handled at director level, which would be the final stage of the internal grievance procedure then the Employee may proceed to the external stage of the procedure.) On receipt of the grievance, the person responsible for dealing with the grievance at stage three (3):

- 7.3.1. must review the attempts made at earlier stages to resolve the grievance and the comments made
- 7.3.2. shall consider whether a further grievance meeting may resolve the grievance.
- 7.3.3. if a further grievance meeting is held, the purpose and conduct thereof will be the same as that of the meeting held at stage one (1).
- 7.3.4. if a grievance meeting is not required or the grievance meeting failed to resolve the grievance, the person considering the grievance shall state why the grievance could not be resolved, record his or her views on the grievance form and return the form to the Employee.

7.4. **Further Stages**

If the grievance remains unresolved after stage three (3) and provided that stage three (3) was not dealt with at director level, the Employee may, within ten (10) working days, refer the grievance to the next organizational level(s) until the grievance reaches director level. The procedure followed at stage four (4) and subsequent internal stages, will be the same as stages two (2) and three (3). If the dispute is not resolved at this stage, management discretion shall apply.

7.5. **Ex-Employee and Company Disputes**

7.5.1. Where an ex-Employee has a grievance against the Company, he or she shall inform HR for resolution of the dispute. HR will investigate the matter and strive to arrive at an amicable settlement of the dispute within thirty (30) calendar days of receipt of the complaint.

7.5.2. If the dispute is not resolved through negotiation with HR, the ex-Employee shall refer the matter for mediation in a Court Connected Multi Door Centre closest to him or her. At present, a Court Connected Multi Door Centre exist in Lagos, Abuja, Kano and Uyo. Where a Multi Door Centre does not exist or is not close to the ex-Employee, the dispute may be referred to any Alternative Dispute Resolution Centre closest to him or her.

8. **RESPONSIBILITY**

8.1. **Human Resources**

- 8.1.1. Must ensure all guidelines of this policy are duly followed by all employees in Heckerbella Limited.
- 8.1.2. Provide support to Employees when necessary on Grievance related issues.
- 8.1.3. Identify and implement better ways to resolve employee grievance issues internally.

8.2. **Employee**

- 8.2.1. All Employees are expected to adhere to the guidelines of this policy.
- 8.2.2. To maintain peace and harmony among colleagues.
- 8.2.3. To support the issue resolution process to ensure grievance matters are resolved promptly.

8.3. **Line Managers and Superiors**

- 8.3.1. To adhere and support the implementation of this policy.
- 8.3.2. To provide leadership support in resolving Grievance issues
- 8.3.3. To promote culture that embrace fairness, respect and harmony.
- 8.3.4. To guide and suggest ways to resolve Grievance issues.

9. DEFINITION OF TERMS

| Abbreviation | Meaning |
|-------------------------|---|
| HRD | Human Resource Department |
| Multi Door Court Centre | is an Alternative Dispute Resolution Centre which is basically founded on the principle of mediation as an alternative to the rigorous court processes. |

APPROVAL

| Approval | Name | Job Title | Signature | Date |
|-------------|------------------|-----------|-------------------------|-----------|
| Reviewed by | Patience Diamond | H.R.M | <i>Patience Diamond</i> | 22/10/18 |
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