

GRIEVANCES

1. DEFINITION

A “grievance” is defined as a disagreement raised by an employee with his or her supervisor or with the Library, involving the interpretation or application of a specific employment policy which the employee believes has, or may have, an adverse impact on him or her.

2. GENERAL LIBRARY PHILOSOPHY

It is the intent of the Library to avoid formal grievance procedures wherever possible by providing a work environment in which employees receive administrative recognition of their concerns and feel free to raise direct questions without fear of reprisal.

3. WHO MAY FILE

Any full-time or regularly-scheduled part-time employee of the Library has the right to appeal any disagreement which he or she feels adversely affects him or her. IN the case of a disagreement that affects the current and actual work, assignments, or tasks or being performed by an employee, the employee shall continue to perform and complete the required tasks as assigned pending the resolution of the grievance, unless doing so allegedly causes risk of harm or injury to the employee.

4. PROCEDURE FOR FILING

a. Payment for time spent in hearings

An employee who files a grievance may attend all scheduled staff hearing with supervisors and administrators on Library time. Payment is for actual time spent in hearings, not for travel, preparation, etc.

b. Routine administrative problem solving

The Library provides an administrative chain of command that is intended to solve the vast majority of personal issues. Before formal grievances are filed, an employee must first have met with his or her supervisor. In a situation where the supervisor is not a member of the Library’s Administrative Staff (the Executive Director, Associate Director, Director of Children’s Services, and Director of Special Collections), a subsequent meeting must have been held with the appropriate member of the Administrative Staff present.

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c. Timely filing

A grievance must be filed within twenty working days after the action or incident involved, or the time the employee becomes aware of this situation. An employee who has a concern should speak with this or her supervisor as soon as possible. If the routine conference(s) described in Section VI-G-4-b, above, do(es) not resolve the issue, a grievance may be filed. If it is not possible for the routine conference(s) described in Section VI-G-4-b to take place within twenty working days of the action or incident, it is nonetheless the responsibility of the employee to be sure that the grievance is filed on time.

For the purposes of the Policy, ten working days are considered to be fourteen calendar days. If official Library holidays fall within that fourteen-day period, however, ten working days will consist of fourteen calendar days plus the number of Library holidays that fell within those fourteen days.

Appeals to successive steps of the grievance procedure must be filed in writing within ten working days of the notice of the decision made in each preceding step, or the grievance will be considered resolved and not subject to further consideration. Exceptions to this schedule may be made at the mutual, written consent of both the employee and the Executive Director.

This grievance policy also provides maximum times for responses by supervisors and the Board of Trustees. Although necessity requires that the maximum times allowed for responses at top administrative levels exceed ten working days, it is nevertheless the intention of the Library to respond as quickly as possible to all grievances.

When staff members or supervisors involved in the grievance process are ill or have previously-scheduled vacations, the maximum times allowed for responding to grievances or for appealing decisions may be extended by the Executive Director, in keeping with the intent of this policy.

d. Alterations

An employee may not amend or alter a grievance during the appeals process.

e. Assistance

An employee may bring a representative of his or her choosing to assist in presents any appeal

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f. Step one – Immediate supervisors

A grievance must first be presented in writing to the employee's immediate superior who shall answer the grievance in writing within ten working days of receiving it. It is expected that most complaints should be resolved at this level of the process.

g. Step two – Department Head

If an employee is not satisfied with the decision rendered under step one, above, he or she may present the grievance to the Department Head (Associate Director, Director of Children's Services, or Director of Special Collections) involved. This grievance shall be presented in writing within ten working days of the employee's receipt of a response from his or her immediate supervisor. The Department Head shall in turn respond to the grievance in writing within ten working days.

h. Step three – Executive Director

An employee who is not satisfied with the decision rendered by the Director. This must be presented in writing within ten working days of the completion of step two. The Executive Director shall respond within twenty working days. The Executive Director's decision is final and binding on all parties.

5. EXCEPTIONS TO THE PROCEDURE

a. Bypassing steps

A staff member who reports directly to a Department Head will skip step one of the grievance procedure when filing a grievance. A staff member who reports directly to the Executive Director will skip steps one and two.

Some supervisors report directly to the Executive Director, but are not ranked as Department Heads. Employees who report to such supervisors will appeal the decisions of their supervisors directly to the Executive Director, skipping step two.

In cases where an employee feels threatened by his or her supervisor, the employee may ask to meet first with the supervisor's supervisor, with a Department Head, or with the Executive Director. Administrative Staff member may ask to meet with the Board of Trustees.

b. Appeals by staff who report directly to the Executive Director

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The Associate Director, Director of Children's Services, or Director of Special Collections may appeal the Executive Director's decision to the Board of Trustees. Such appeals must be made in writing within ten working days of the Executive Director's decision. The Board of Trustees shall respond within forty working days. In such cases, the decision of the Board of Trustees is final and binding on all parties.

Any other staff member who reports directly to the Executive Director may appeal to the three Department heads, who will review the appeal at the group. Such appeals must be made in writing within ten working days of the Executive Director's decision. The Department Heads shall respond within twenty working days. The decision of the three Department Heads is advisory and not binding on the Executive Director, whose final decision is binding on all parties.

c. Appeals to the Civil Service Commission

Civil-service employees have the option of requesting a hearing with the Civil Service Commission, in actions involving suspension or discharge.

These requests must be filed in accordance with the rules of the Civil Service Commission

d. Claims of illegal discrimination and of sexual harassment

Staff members are strongly encourage to begin grievances in their area by using the procedures outlined above. However, any claims of illegal discrimination or sexual harassment may be referred directly to the Human Relations Officer of the City of Urbana at any time.

Adopted December 8, 1992