

TOBAGO REGIONAL HEALTH AUTHORITY

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| Name of the Policy: | GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE | |
| Date Submitted: | 09 October 2009 | |
| Approved By: | Human Resource Committee | 25 November 2009 |
| Approved By: | Board of Directors | 24 February 2010 |
| Amendments: | | 31 December 2010 |

POLICY:

The Authority is committed to the maintenance of a harmonious working environment that focuses on conflict prevention as far as possible. Where conflict arises, the Authority will emphasize conflict management and resolution to address employees concerns. The Authority has established a grievance handling process as a means of handling problems internally. The process is predicated on the fair and just treatment of employees and the need to handle their concerns promptly.

The Authority specifically recognizes:

- The rights of employees to report a grievance to the Authority's management
- That employees should feel free and uninhibited in raising concerns relating to their work
- That in voicing concerns, the employee should have no fear of intimidation, retaliation or breach of their confidence

Confidentiality is a key element in the process and is extended to all involved employees, witnesses and the entire proceeding. Any violation of confidentiality may lead to disciplinary action.

For the purpose of this policy, a grievance is a complaint by an employee or employer, requiring formal action. However, employee issues are best resolved informally at the source with the relevant supervisor/line manager, without recourse to the official procedure.

GUIDELINES:

Any employee or group of employees may present grievances to the Authority in the following manner:

STAGE 1

An aggrieved Employee may submit a grievance within two (2) working days of the date the issue first gave rise to the grievance with his/her immediate supervisor. The supervisor shall hear the matter within two (2) working days and shall respond in writing subsequently to the aggrieved Employee, informing the employee of his/her decision. The Employee can proceed to Stage 2 if the issue is unresolved at Stage 1.

STAGE 2

Failing a solution at Stage 1, the grievance may thereafter be submitted in writing to the second line Supervisor/Manager/Head of Department, within five (5) working days of the decision of the supervisor.

The line Supervisor/Manager/Head of Department shall hear the matter within five (5) working days of receipt of the grievance, and shall respond in writing subsequently to the aggrieved Employee, informing the employee of his/her decision. The Employee can proceed to Stage 3 if the issue is unresolved at Stage 2.

STAGE 3

Failing a solution at Stage 2, the grievance may thereafter be submitted in writing to the General Manager responsible for the department to which the employee is assigned, within five (5) working days of the decision of the second line Supervisor/Manager/Head of Department.

The General Manager shall hear the matter within five (5) working day of receipt of the grievance, and shall respond in writing subsequently to the aggrieved Employee, informing the employee of his/her decision. The Employee can proceed to Stage 4 if the issue is unresolved at Stage 3.

STAGE 4

Failing a solution at Stage 3, the grievance may thereafter be submitted in writing to the Manager Human Resources within ten (10) working days of the decision of the General Manager.

The Manager Human Resources or designated officer shall hear the matter within ten (10) working days of receipt of the grievance, and shall respond in writing subsequently to the aggrieved Employee, informing the employee of his/her decision. The Employee can proceed to Stage 5 if the issue is unresolved at Stage 4.

STAGE 5

Failing a solution at Stage 4, the Employee may seek a hearing with an Executive Committee comprising of the General Managers of the Authority within ten (10) working days of the decision of the Manager Human Resources, however the request must be submitted in writing to the Chief Executive Officer who would make the necessary arrangements within a four (4) week period, and shall respond in writing subsequently to the aggrieved Employee, informing the employee of the final decision.

STAGE 6

The meeting with the Executive Committee is the final stage in the internal grievance procedure. If the employee remains unsatisfied a Dispute is deemed to exist and may be referred, to the Minister of Labour in accordance with the Industrial Relations Act of 1972 Chapter 88.01.

Notes:

- At stages 1 and 2 of the Grievance Procedure, the Human Resource Department **must** be consulted in an attempt to find a solution.
- Staff are encouraged to have a free and open discussion with their line manager in order to mutually resolve the issue.
- The employee may be accompanied by a representative of his choice.
- Either party may call on witnesses for evidence to the dispute.
- The employee will receive a response in writing at every stage of the procedure in the prescribe format.
- The Executive Panel would consist of the Executive Managers which would comprise of a minimum of three (3) persons. The Executive Manager/s who was involved in the process would not be a member of this Executive Panel for the purpose of making a final decision.