

Team Member Complaints

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| Policy Name: | Team Member Complaints |
| Policy Number: | 4.4.9 |
| Originating: | Chapter 4: Human Resources; Section 4: Employment Practices |
| Approval Authority: | Board of Directors |
| Date of Approval of Original Policy: | January 16, 2013 |
| Last Updated: | March 21, 2017 |
| Mandatory Revision Date: | December 2020 |
| Contact: | Chief Executive Officer |

Purpose:

The policy sets out the position of Hope Place Centres (HPC) with respect to providing Team Members (supervisors, staff, student placements and service contractors) with a mechanism to bring forward their concerns and/or have issues resolved.

By developing this policy HPC is:

- Committed to a process of resolving issues through discussion up to and including filing a formal complaint.
- Ensuring team members that their concern will be dealt with in a timely, fair and respectful manner until the issue is resolved.
- Committed to making the complaint resolution process accessible, open and transparent; as well as providing individuals with a mechanism to use that is simple and clear.

Policy:

HPC strives to provide a healthy workplace by incorporating equitable HR practices. This includes Team Members being provided with clear guidelines for resolving issues up to and including a formal complaint. This may include issues with HR policies and procedures, job responsibilities, working conditions, professional relationships, and performance of individual Team Members.

Procedures:

HPC prefers that, whenever possible, a Team Member will choose to express their concern and/or resolve their issues *informally* before finding it necessary to initiate the formal complaint procedure. Team Members may proceed with any of the following *informal* options:

- a) Speak directly to the Team Member who is involved in the situation.
- b) Speak with another Team Member, including a Supervisor or the Chief Executive Officer.
- c) Request a facilitated meeting (prior to “Preliminary Inquiry” stage that is detailed in formal complaint process) with involved persons.

1. How to file a formal complaint

- 1.1. Where the concern and/or issue has not been resolved during the *informal* process or in cases where the individual is not comfortable proceeding *informally*, a Complaint Form shall be completed (please see appendix “A”) to initiate the formal process.
 - 1.1.1. The completed Complaint Form should include all details of the concern and/or issue, including: Date(s) and time(s) when incident(s) that gave rise to the concern and/or issue occurred; brief description of the concern and/or issue; any person(s) involved or witnesses; and the specific resolution the complainant is seeking.
- 1.2. The completed Complaint Form must be handed-in to a Supervisor or Chief Executive Officer.
- 1.3. All Complaint Forms received by the Supervisor or Chief Executive Officer shall be initially responded to within two (2) business days.

2. Complaint Resolution

2.1. Preliminary Inquiry:

- 2.1.1. The Supervisor or Chief Executive Officer will review the Complaint Form and initially respond to the complainant within two (2) business days, acknowledging that complaint has been received and is under review.
- 2.1.2. The Supervisor or Chief Executive Officer will speak with the complainant about the concern and/or issue as required to clarify the facts detailed on the Complaint Form.
- 2.1.3. The Supervisor or Chief Executive Officer will speak with all those involved in the concern and/or issue described on the Complaint Form to gather information.
- 2.1.4. Once the preliminary inquiry is complete, the Supervisor or Chief Executive Officer will determine a process to best achieve the resolution requested by the complainant; which could require further investigation.
- 2.1.5. Whenever possible and/or appropriate, HPC prefers for all persons involved to be engaged in the resolution process through structured face-to-face discussions, facilitated by the Supervisor or Chief Executive Officer.

2.2. Investigation:

- 2.2.1. HPC may chose to conduct an investigation at any point, including during the *informal* process. Whenever an investigation is required in order to respond to a Complaint Form, the concern and/or issue that gave rise to the complaint must have occurred within the three (3) months immediately preceding the date the Complaint Form was received by the Supervisor or Chief Executive Officer.

- 2.2.2. The Supervisor or Chief Executive Officer will review the Complaint Form, and if appropriate, order an investigation - including determining who will be assigned to complete the investigation. The investigation will begin no later than five (5) business days after the Supervisor or Chief Executive Officer has made the order.
- 2.2.3. The investigation will be conducted by one of the following: The Supervisor, Chief Executive Officer or designate from the Board of Directors. The investigator will be selected on the basis of individuals identified as parties to the complaint, for example; complaints involving a Team Member who provides direct service, including contractors and volunteers (other than Board Members), will typically be investigated by the Supervisor, complaints involving the Supervisor will typically be investigated by the Chief Executive Officer, and complaints involving the Chief Executive Officer or Board Members will typically be investigated by a designate from the Board of Directors.
- 2.2.4. The investigator will meet separately with all parties involved and will keep detailed documentation of each interview.
- 2.2.5. The investigator will prepare a summary and validate it with interviewees to confirm accuracy. Once the summary is confirmed as accurate, a detailed report of the complaint, the response and any additional relevant information will be submitted for review.
- 2.2.6. The Supervisor, Chief Executive Officer or designate from the Board of Directors will review the information submitted by the investigator and determine the follow-up action required, which may include but is not limited to; dismissal of the complaint, action to achieve resolution requested by complainant, and further mediation.
- 2.2.7. If the Supervisor or Chief Executive Officer is unable to achieve resolution that is satisfactory to the complainant, the complaint shall be referred to the designate from the Board of Directors.
- 2.2.8. The designate from the Board of Directors will review the information contained in the report prepared by the investigator and the disposition recommended by the Supervisor or Chief Executive Officer. The designate from the Board of Directors will then decide what further action, if any, is required and will inform the complainant of this decision in writing. It is the responsibility of HPC staff to implement the decision of the designate from the Board of Directors.

2.3. Mediation:

- 2.3.1. If mediation is required, the intention would be to allow the opportunity for all parties to communicate face-to-face, in a structured meeting, to discuss the concerns and/or issues in an effort to come to an agreement.

2.3.1.1. Each party may be accompanied at the mediation meeting by another individual who is neutral to the complaint but who they wish to have support them through the process.

2.3.2. If an understanding, apology, or other form of resolution is achieved through mediation the agreement will be put in writing and will be signed by all parties. The Supervisor or Chief Executive Officer will keep this documentation in a secure file.

2.3.3. If resolution is not achieved between all parties, the Mediator will outline the next steps in the process which may include the complaint and all proceedings up to this point being referred to the designate from the Board of Directors.

2.3.4. The designate from the Board of Directors will then decide what further action, if any, is required and will inform the complainant of this decision in writing. It is the responsibility of HPC staff to implement the decision of the designate from the Board of Directors.

3. *Appeal Process:*

3.1. If the complainant is still not satisfied with the outcome following the decision of the designate from the Board of Directors, he/she can appeal the decision to the Ontario Ministry of Labour. A Ministry of Labour representative will consider whether or not due process was followed.

3.1.1. This will not necessarily change the final outcome.

3.2. Contact information for the Supervisor, Chief Executive Officer, designate from the Board of Directors, and Ministry of Labour representative will be provided without reasonable delay, to any Team Member upon request.