



Complaints, Grievances and Dispute Resolution

Disciplinary Procedures and Dismissal

SEE-Change Inc

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Complaint, Grievances and Dispute Resolution

1. Introduction

SEE-Change's values include:

- Peaceful empowerment
- Respect for difference
- Friendship and support
- Social justice
- Healthy people on a healthy planet
- A sustainable future

SEE-Change Inc operates on the following guiding principles and ethics:

- We will treat all people with dignity and respect
- Our governance and work practice will promote equity and reflect the diversity of our community
- We will commit to continuous improvement
- We will approach our work with flexibility and innovation
- We will strive for sustainability in all our activities
- We will be accountable and professional
- We will have fun and be supportive

Unfortunately, there are a number of situations that may arise in which persons involved with SEE-Change may feel it is necessary to make a complaint. This may include serious instances of harassment, intimidation or discrimination within SEE-Change or may relate to process failure and disputes with another volunteer or staff member. SEE-Change staff, volunteers, members or anyone else involved with SEE-Change, are firstly encouraged to attempt to resolve the issue informally or with the other parties involved before following the complaint process.

2. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to:

- Provide an outline for the complaint and dispute resolution process to ensure consistency
- Give step-by-step guidance to those involved in the complaint process about what they can expect
- Ensure that everyone involved with SEE-Change has access to and knowledge about lodging a complaint or taking place in dispute resolution processes
- Ensure that all parties involved in complaint and dispute resolution procedures are aware of their rights and responsibilities and that all parties are heard

3. Rights and Responsibilities

All parties have the right to:

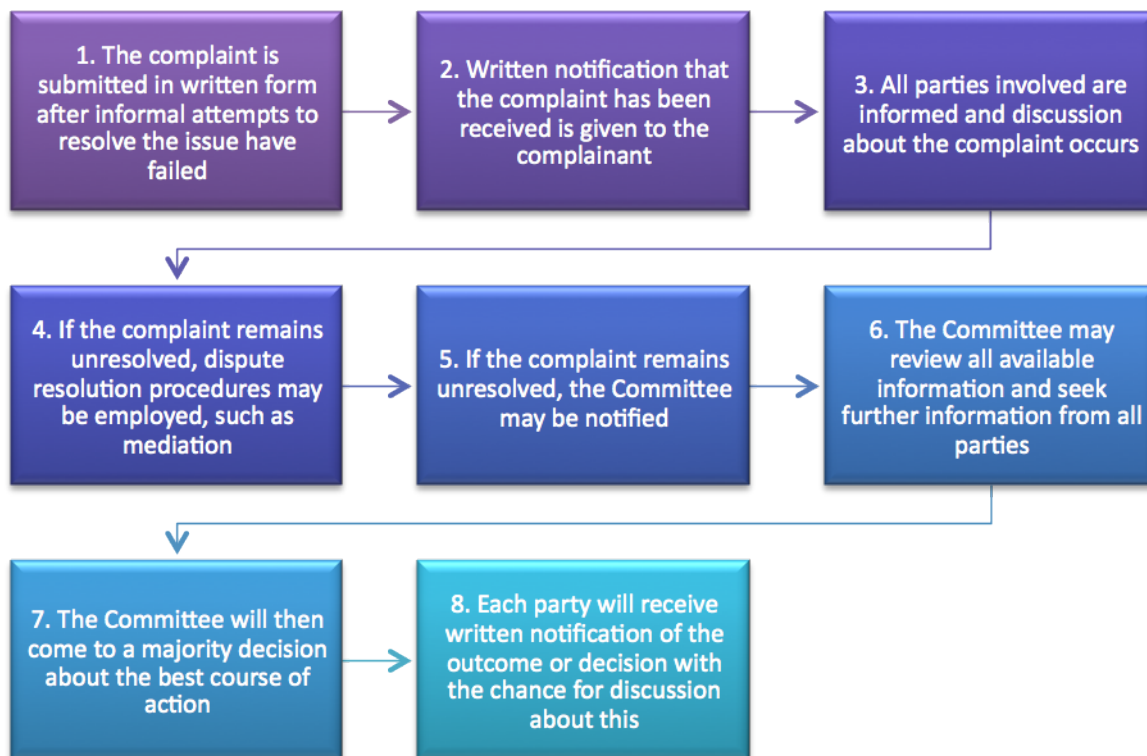
- Be treated with respect and fairness
- Have their voices heard during the dispute resolution process
- Be informed in a timely fashion about the complaint and dispute resolution process and any changes or decisions made
- Have their complaint taken seriously and handled in a confidential manner
- Be given any and all opportunities to resolve the dispute within the parameters of the dispute resolution process

The Executive Officer, Volunteer Co-ordinator or Committee member overseeing the complaint or dispute resolution procedure has the responsibility to:

- Address complaints in a timely and confidential manner to minimise further conflict
- Oversee all complaints in a fair and unbiased fashion
- Listen to and take seriously all parties involved
- Inform all parties of any decisions or changes made throughout the dispute resolution process
- Give involved parties any and all opportunities to resolve the dispute within the dispute resolution parameters before making a final decision
- Record the process

4. Procedures

When a formal complaint is made, the following process must be followed:



1. All formal complaints must be submitted in written format to either the Volunteer Co-ordinator or the Executive Officer. Should the complaint specifically involve the Volunteer Co-ordinator or the Executive Officer, and attempts to resolve the issue informally have failed, the complaint may be made to the appropriate local group convenor, or another Committee member, who will also follow this process.
2. The person overseeing the complaint will then give written notification to the complainant that they have received the complaint.
3. The overseer will, at their discretion, inform all parties involved. All parties will have the opportunity to be heard by the person overseeing the complaint. All interactions and discussions throughout the entire process will be recorded including the date, time, details of the conversation and so on.
4. If the complaint or dispute is not resolved during the course of these conversations, the person overseeing the complaint may choose to employ a dispute resolution process such as mediation by an impartial third party.
5. Should the complaint remain unresolved, the overseer may, at their discretion, bring the issue to the attention of the SEE-Change Committee at the next Committee meeting.
6. The Committee may review all available information, seek new information and hear from each party if desired.
7. Following this discussion, the Committee will then come to a majority decision about the best course of action.

8. Each party will receive written notification of the outcome or decision, which in extreme cases may include dismissal from duties and involvement in SEE-Change. This notification will include any steps or responsibilities that are expected of each party and each party will also have an opportunity to comment on the decision before it is finalised.

5. Review of this Policy

This policy should be reviewed annually by the Executive Officer or a person designated by the Executive Officer. It should be reviewed in relation to any recent changes in local, state or national legislation affecting this policy and any internal changes within SEE-Change since the last review and updated if necessary. Any changes should be confirmed by the Committee.

Disciplinary Procedures and Dismissal

1. Introduction

There may be some situations where SEE-Change is required to discipline or dismiss members, volunteers and staff for unacceptable conduct whilst performing SEE-Change duties, or behaviour that does not uphold the responsibilities outlined in the *Volunteer Policy Handbook* and other SEE-Change policies. These acts of misconduct may include, but are not limited to; drunkenness, theft, violence, obscenity and threatening behaviour. In these instances, SEE-Change will follow a three-strike procedure as outlined below.

2. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that:

- A standard three-strike procedure for discipline and dismissal is followed consistently within SEE-Change
- Inappropriate conduct and behaviour is identified and dealt with accordingly
- Others are not put at risk due to inappropriate conduct and behaviour
- Everyone involved with SEE-Change is aware of their behavioural expectations and possible consequences of inappropriate behaviour
- Everyone involved with SEE-Change has access to and knowledge about the steps followed during disciplinary and dismissal procedures

3. Rights and Responsibilities

All persons involved with SEE-Change have the right to:

- Feel safe when completing duties for the purpose of SEE-Change
- Be informed in a timely fashion when their behaviour is unacceptable and given the opportunity to rectify their behaviour
- Be treated with respect and fairness in all disciplinary procedures
- Be aware of the steps followed in the three-strike disciplinary and dismissal procedure
- Be informed about decisions at all steps of the procedure and given opportunities for discussion at all steps of the procedure
- Be given clear reasons for disciplinary warnings and any subsequent dismissal
- Be informed of the possible consequences should their inappropriate behaviour continue
- Cease their involvement with SEE-Change at any time for any reason

All persons involved in SEE-Change have the responsibility to:

- Behave and conduct themselves in a way that upholds the rights of all persons involved with SEE-Change
- Behave and conduct themselves in a way that upholds the good name of SEE-Change and does not intimidate, harm, discriminate against or put at risk any other persons involved with SEE-Change or any members of the public
- Rectify their inappropriate behaviour immediately
- Obey any reasonable demands in relation to their inappropriate behaviour and the safety of themselves or others
- Inform the Volunteer Co-ordinator, Executive Officer, a local group convenor or another SEE-Change Inc Committee member of any inappropriate behaviour witnessed by them

The Volunteer Co-ordinator, Executive Officer or other person primarily handling the discipline and dismissal process has the responsibility to:

- Be open and honest about the reasons for discipline or dismissal
- Inform the person being disciplined about the three-strike procedure
- Give the person being disciplined both verbal and written warnings and the opportunity to rectify their behaviour before dismissal takes place
- Maintain accurate records of all incidences, discussions, warnings etc that take place during the disciplinary and dismissal procedures
- Perform their disciplinary and dismissal duties in a fair and unbiased manner

4. Procedures

When the need for disciplinary action has been identified, a three-strike procedure as outlined below will be followed:

1. A verbal informal warning about the misconduct will be given by the Volunteer Co-ordinator, Executive Officer or Committee member at their discretion, as well as an explanation of the three-strike procedure. The Volunteer Co-ordinator, Executive Officer or Committee member will record the details of the first warning, including the date, time, details and any subsequent relevant conversations.

2. If the behaviour continues, a formal written warning will be given by the Volunteer Co-ordinator, Executive Officer or Committee member with possible consequences for the continuing behaviour outlined. Clear reasons for the written warning will be given with the chance for discussion. The staff member, volunteer or SEE-Change member will be given any and all opportunities to cease the misconduct.

3. If the behaviour continues after the formal written warning is given, the volunteer or member will be given written notice that their case has been taken to the SEE-Change Committee or Executive Officer who will then follow the dismissal procedure outlined in Section 3 of the *SEE-Change Constitution*. This may include an invitation to attend the next SEE-Change Committee meeting to present their case in written format or verbally, a written notice of the resolution which may include dismissal or member suspension and information about their right to appeal the resolution or decision.

5. Review of this Policy

This policy should be reviewed annually by the Executive Officer or a person designated by the Executive Officer. It should be reviewed in relation to any recent changes in local, state or national legislation affecting this policy and any internal changes within SEE-Change since the last review and updated if necessary. Any changes are to be confirmed by the Committee.