

Grievance Guide for employees

This guide provides information and advice on how to raise and deal with a genuine work related concern.

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Getting help

Contact your manager if you have any queries about this guide.

Managers can obtain advice by:

Calling the HR Services Advice Centre on 0345 6060603 / 5456 7100

Managers working for Parcelforce Worldwide should call 0345 6042787 / 5456 4747

For web access go to:
<https://www.psp.royalmailgroup.com>



Grievance

Guide for employees

Overview

This guide provides advice on how to raise a genuine work related concern and the approach to be taken to resolve the concern in a timely manner.

This should be read in conjunction with the Grievance Policy.

Royal Mail Group believe the majority of workplace concerns can be resolved informally; however where this cannot be achieved, managers should follow the approach below.

What is a grievance?

A grievance is a genuine concern an employee has about their work or employment. We actively encourage managers and employees to talk through any concerns affecting them in the workplace. Most concerns can be resolved through day to day informal discussions.

Where this is not possible the concern can be raised as a grievance.

The grievance process consists of three parts

- 'Resolution with your manager'
- 'Resolution with your second line or another appropriate manager'
- Appeal

Each part is explained in more detail in the sections below.

Most concerns can be dealt with through the grievance process. However there are a few exceptions and typically this will be because there is a more appropriate policy. This should be explained fully to the employee so they are able to raise the concern under the relevant policy.

Who can attend grievance meetings?

The employee may be accompanied at any meeting in the grievance process by their union representative or a work colleague normally from the same work location.

'Resolution with your manager'

Many workplace concerns can be resolved and dealt with through day to day discussions. Where a concern is identified, the employee should initially speak with their manager. Discussing the concern in this way will often end in resolution.

Where the concern is not resolved, the manager or employee can ask for a meeting. This meeting could be on the same day or arranged as soon as possible.

Following the meeting the manager will let the employee know the outcome verbally. Where requested, the manager will provide a summary of the outcome in bullet point format.

The outcome should be recorded on PSP and communicated within one to fourteen calendar days of the concern being raised.

'Resolution with your second line or another appropriate manager'

Where the concern is not resolved by their manager, the employee can within three working days of being informed of the outcome, raise the grievance to the next part of the grievance process by:

- Normally talking to their manager who will escalate to the second line manager through PSP
- If that is not possible contacting their second line manager directly

- Exceptionally by contacting HR Services on 0345 6060 603

The employee should provide details, ideally in writing, of the concern and why the outcome with their manager is not acceptable. The employee should receive confirmation the case has been recorded on PSP.

The second line manager is accountable for ensuring that the case is completed. The second line manager will deal with the case themselves or exceptionally they can assign it to another appropriate manager who is independent and has the authority to deal with the case which could include changing the decision by the original manager. The case manager should be a higher grade to the employee's manager. Exceptions could include where the second line manager is directly involved or where the timeliness of dealing with a grievance is likely to negatively impact on the employee.

The second line manager or another appropriate manager assigned to the case will invite the employee to a meeting. The manager should send a summary of the notes of the meeting to the employee for their information and to make any changes. They will also carry out any further enquiries required. Where further enquiries are completed relevant information should be shared with the employee.

The manager assigned to the case will provide the outcome in writing in a report format providing details of the decision rationale and how the employee can appeal.

The outcome will be recorded on PSP and should be completed within five to twenty eight calendar days of the concern being raised to the second line manager.

Appeal

Where the concern is not resolved having followed the process above, the employee can appeal the decision within five working days of receiving the outcome by either:

- Normally informing the second line manager who will record and escalate the concern to appeal on PSP or
- By asking HR Services to escalate it on PSP, or if the decision is communicated by email, the employee can follow instructions in the email to self-escalate

The employee should set out in writing why they wish to appeal and wherever possible propose a solution that would resolve their concern.

The appeal is escalated to the third line manager. The third line manager is accountable for the appeal and will hear the appeal or assign to an appropriate manager who is independent and has the authority to change the decision.

The employee will receive confirmation the appeal has been recorded on PSP.

The appeal manager will invite the employee to a meeting.

The appeal manager should forward two copies of the meeting notes to the employee and allow them three working days to make any changes. The appeal manager completes further investigation where required. Where further investigations are completed relevant information should be shared with the employee. The appeal manager makes their decision and sends an outcome report to the employee. The report should contain the following:

- An overview of the concern:
- Actions completed i.e. meetings held
- Rationale - factors the manager considered when making their decision
- Their decision

The appeal manager will record their decision on PSP and should complete the appeal within twelve to forty two calendar days. This completes the internal grievance process.

If the concern is not dealt with

Where despite contacting their manager the concern is not dealt with, the employee can contact HR Services on 0345 6060 603. The case will be recorded on PSP.

If the concern involves your manager

Where the concern involves the employee's manager, the employee can either:

- Talk to their second line manager; or
- Contact HR Services on 0345 6060 603

When the concern has been escalated to the second line manager, they should consider the facts of the case and decide whether it is appropriate for them or another appropriate manager to deal with the concern or whether it can be passed back to the employee's manager for resolution.

The manager should invite the employee to a meeting and complete the actions outlined in the relevant section above.

If the concern involves your first and second line managers

If the concern involves the first and second line managers, the employee should contact HR Services. The case will be recorded on PSP and details forwarded to the third line manager.

The third line manager will assign the case to a manager who will deal with the case. This manager should be independent and have the authority to deal with case. Therefore the case manager should be an equivalent grade to the employee's second line manager.

Good practice

All concerns raised should be taken seriously and completed within the timescales listed. When considering the location or timing of any meeting required, the manager should take into account the personal circumstances of the employee.

The manager should ensure they take a supportive and positive approach to grievance meetings and discussions. They should be able to explain the process followed and how they have made their decision.

Delay

Where the employee's manager does not respond within fourteen calendar days and the manager has not provided an explanation why there is a delay, the employee can contact HR Services. The case will be recorded on PSP and escalated to their second line manager.

Where there is a delay in any part of the process, the employee should be informed of the reason for the delay.

Role of mediation

The manager dealing with the concern should consider if having heard details of the case whether it is appropriate for it to be resolved through mediation.

In cases where it is appropriate, the manager should always discuss the option of mediation with the employee and advise the employee that a mediator will contact them to provide details of the mediation service and what the employee can expect. There is a guide to workplace mediation which is available that helps explain mediation for the employee and manager.

The manager can contact the mediation team by sending an e-mail to ir.mediators@royalmail.com. The mediation team will usually be in contact within 48 hours.

Mediation is voluntary and all parties involved must agree for it to take place. If the mediation progresses, the timelines on the grievance case will pause until the mediation takes place.

The mediator will inform the manager dealing with the grievance if the mediation is successful. . The manager will update the case on PSP and decide on next steps in the grievance process.

Confidentiality

The manager or anyone else involved should treat the concerns confidentially. The manager may need to speak to others to obtain the relevant information or to seek advice from within the business. Where this is required, the manager should ensure the number of others involved is kept to a minimum.

Where information is shared with the employee documents will be reviewed to ensure that personal details e.g. phone numbers, home addresses are removed. Anonymisation should only be considered where the manager believes there is a real fear of intimidation or reprisal and where a legitimate request for anonymity has been made.

Where to go for more information

The Getting help box on the front of this guide tells you where to find more information. Guidance is also available on the Policy and Information Site on PSP:

- Grievance Policy
- Raising Issues - hints and tips support booklet for managers
- Raising Issues – at a glance policy summary for OPGs