



Grievance policy booklet

An update for managers and union reps
on the revised approach



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Foreword

We are pleased to be launching the revised Grievance Policy across Royal Mail Group with Unite and CWU.

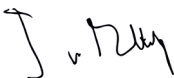
The policy aims to help employees and managers resolve work-related concerns in a positive, constructive and timely way, by providing a robust process for managers to deal with these concerns. The process for dealing with grievances has been simplified to make sure concerns can be dealt with quickly and effectively.

We believe many workplace concerns can be dealt with through day-to-day discussions. A key aim of the revised policy is to encourage employees to discuss the matter with their manager as soon as possible after it arises. By talking through the concern in this way, we think the majority will be resolved at this point.

If concerns cannot be resolved by the first line manager, they may have to be raised with the second or third line managers. They are accountable for making sure the grievance case is completed in a timely manner.

The revised policy improves on good practice set out by ACAS and has been agreed jointly with our unions, replacing the existing policy and guide.

We believe the new approach will benefit the business, our employees and union representatives. We hope you find this booklet useful in helping you resolve employee concerns.



Jon Millidge

Royal Mail Group HR Director



Ray Ellis

CWU Assistant Secretary



Brian Scott

Unite CMA Officer

What has changed?

- The grievance process has been simplified so more concerns can be dealt with by the employee's manager
- Employees are encouraged to talk to their manager as soon as their concern arises. Where they are unable to, they can contact their second line manager directly or exceptionally HR Services
- Second line manager – accountable for making sure concerns raised with them are dealt with quickly and effectively. Exceptionally they may assign the case to another appropriate manager
- Appeal – the third line manager is accountable for the appeal being completed. They will hear the appeal or assign it to an appropriate manager who is independent and has the authority to change the decision of the second line manager
- Cases will be recorded on PSP and prompts for action will be sent to managers
- A key change is there are now timescales for dealing with concerns and an escalation process if timescales are not met



Our expectations of our managers

- As a manager, you are encouraged to talk through any concerns your employees have as soon as possible
- Try to resolve the employee's concern as quickly and sensitively as possible
- Treat all employees with dignity and respect in line with Royal Mail's values
- Take each concern seriously and carry out any necessary investigations promptly and thoroughly
- Take a supportive and positive approach to grievance meetings and discussions
- Act consistently and fairly
- Progress within timescales wherever possible or inform employees of any reason for delays
- Record grievance cases on PSP

What is a grievance?

A genuine concern an employee has about their work or employment.

Who can attend grievance meetings?

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

Raising concerns

Day-to-day discussions

Many workplace concerns can be resolved during day-to-day discussions, so we want employees to talk to their manager as soon as possible.

If an employee raises a concern with you, consider the following:

- Make sure the discussion takes place in an appropriate place where the employee will feel comfortable to discuss their concern
- Listen to what they have to say and follow up with any questions you have to clarify the details
- Consider whether you need to review any relevant Royal Mail Group policies or guidance before identifying a solution
- Try to provide a response to their concern by the end of the discussion. If you need more time to consider your response, make this clear to the employee and agree when you will have a follow up discussion



Raising concerns Resolution with your manager

If a discussion will not resolve the matter immediately, the employee can ask to meet with you. You should:

- Meet with the employee in an appropriate place where the employee feels comfortable to discuss their concern
- Listen to what they have to say and follow up with any questions you have to clarify the details
- Complete any necessary investigation. This could involve, for example, reviewing relevant Royal Mail policy or guidance or meeting with witnesses
- Consider the information you have gathered and how best you can resolve the concern
- Confirm the outcome verbally to the employee or in written bullet format if they request it
- Record the outcome on PSP

You should deal with employees' concerns as soon as possible, preferably on the day or within a few days. 'Resolution with your manager' should be completed within **1 to 14** calendar days.

If you do not respond to the employee's concern within 14 calendar days, they can contact HR Services on **0345 606 0603** who will record the case on PSP and escalate to your manager.

Resolution with your second line or another appropriate manager

Employees can raise a grievance with their second line manager when:

- They aren't satisfied with the resolution from their manager (this should be within three working days of receiving the outcome from 'Resolution with your manager')
- Their concern has not been dealt with
- Their concern involves their manager

How?

- Employee talks to their manager who escalates the case through PSP
- Employee talks directly to their second line manager
- Employee contacts HR Services by calling **0345 606 0603**

Dealing with the case

If you are a second line manager you will deal with the case when it is escalated to you, or exceptionally you can assign it to another appropriate manager who has the authority to deal with the case (i.e. they can change the decision of the employee's manager and are a higher grade). For example, this could occur 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.

In some cases it may be appropriate to pass it back to the employee's manager for resolution. You can contact HR Advice and Support for guidance.

You always have overall accountability for making sure that the employee's concern is addressed, even if you assign it to another manager.

Manager assigned to the case

If you are assigned a case, you should:

- Meet with the employee in an appropriate area where the employee is comfortable discussing their concern
- Listen to what they have to say and follow up with any questions you have to clarify the details
- Share a summary of the meeting with the employee for their comments
- Complete any necessary further investigations then share the relevant information with the employee
- Consider the information you have gathered and how best you can resolve the concern
- Inform the employee in writing of your decision and next steps if they aren't satisfied with the outcome
- Record the outcome on PSP

You should deal with the employee's concern as soon as possible and complete the case within **5 to 28** calendar days. Make sure you inform the employee of any delays outside of the agreed timescales.

Appeal

If the employee isn't satisfied with the outcome from 'Resolution with your second line or another appropriate manager', they can appeal in writing (within five working days) by:

- Informing their second line manager who escalates to the third line manager on PSP
- By asking HR Services to escalate it on PSP or, if the decision is communicated by email, they can follow instructions in the email to self-escalate

Third line manager

If you are the third line manager you are accountable for the appeal being completed. You can hear the appeal yourself or assign to another appropriate manager who is independent and has the authority to change the decision made by the second line manager.



Appeal manager

As the appeal manager, you should:

- Meet with the employee in an appropriate area where they are comfortable discussing their concern
- Listen to what they have to say and follow up with any questions you have to clarify the details
- Share two copies of the meeting notes with the employee for them to make comments within three working days
- Complete any necessary further investigations then share the relevant information with the employee
- Consider the information you have gathered and how best you can resolve the concern
- Inform the employee in writing of your final decision
- Record the outcome on PSP

You should deal with the employee's concern as soon as possible and complete the case within **12 to 42** calendar days. Make sure you inform the employee of any delays outside of the agreed timescales.



If the concern involves the employee's manager

Employees can raise their concern by:

- Talking to their second line manager
- Contacting HR Services who will record the case on PSP and forward it to the second line manager

Dealing with the case

When a case is escalated to you as the second line manager, consider whether it is appropriate for you to:

- Deal with the concern yourself
- Re-assign it to another manager (via PSP) who has the authority to deal with the case
- Pass it back to the employee's manager for resolution

You will always be accountable for the case being completed.



If the concern involves the first and second line manager

Employees can contact HR Services who will record the case on PSP and forward to the third line manager.

Dealing with the case

As the third line manager, you will need to assign the case to another independent manager. You will be accountable for the case being completed. Therefore, the case manager should be an equivalent grade to the employee's second line manager.



Timescales for dealing with grievances

Resolution with your manager

You have **1 to 14** calendar days to complete the case.

If you don't respond, the employee can contact HR Services to record on PSP and escalate to the second line manager.

Resolution with second line or another appropriate manager

You have **5 to 28** calendar days to complete the case.

Appeals

You have **12 to 42** calendar days to complete the case.



Mediation

When you are dealing with an employee's concern, consider whether it could be resolved through mediation.

Mediation is a way of resolving difficult situations. The mediator is an impartial third party. They help two or more people to have an open and honest dialogue so that they can secure a mutually acceptable outcome. Mediation is not going to be suitable for all grievances; however, for some it may be more effective than using the grievance process.

For more details about mediation please look at 'The Participants' Guide to Mediation' which you can find on the Policy and Information site under Grievance and Guides.

Always discuss this with the employee as mediation is voluntary and all parties must agree to take part.

Contact the mediation team on **ir.mediators@royalmail.com**. A mediator will contact the employee within approximately 48 hours.

Where mediation is taking place, you should record this on PSP; the grievance case is paused until the mediation is completed.

Once the mediator has confirmed to you the mediation has been completed, update the case on PSP and decide on any next steps in the grievance process.



Where to go for further help

Policy and Information site on PSP

- Grievance Policy
- Grievance Guide
- Raising issues - hints and tips support booklet (for managers)
- Raising issues at a glance policy summary (for employees)
- The Participant's Guide to Mediation

e-learning via Success Factors

- How to deal with employee concerns and grievances

Help and advice tab on PSP

- Grievance section contains 'how to' video clips to help you log and track cases on PSP, e.g. 'Creating a case', 'Assigning a case to another manager'



National HR Advice and Support Centre Contact

Tel: **5456 7100 (0345 6060603)**. Regional contact details are below:

HR Advice & Support contact details

Function	Telephone	Post Line	Email Address
Delivery	0345 606 0261	5456 4889	hrsc.regional.advice.and.support@royalmail.com
Processing	0345 604 3629	5456 4543	hrsc.regional.advice.and.support@royalmail.com
Property & Facilities Solutions	0345 600 0166	5456 4888	hrsc.regional.advice.and.support@royalmail.com
Parcels	0345 604 2787	5456 4747	hrsc.regional.advice.and.support@royalmail.com
Logistics	0345 604 2407	5456 4744	hrsc.regional.advice.and.support@royalmail.com
Corporate Centre	0345 604 3234	5456 4739	hrsc.regional.advice.and.support@royalmail.com



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