

# Grievance Procedure Policy

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## Purpose

Our grievance procedure policy explains how staff and volunteers can voice their complaints in a constructive way. Trustees and Managers should know what concerns staff and volunteers or hinders their work, so they can resolve it as quickly as possible. Staff and volunteers should be able to follow a fair grievance procedure to be heard and avoid conflicts. The charity encourages staff and volunteers to communicate their grievances. That way we can foster a supportive and pleasant workplace for everyone.

## Scope

This policy refers to staff, volunteers and members of New Day Church regardless of position or status. It should be read in conjunction with other related policies which are available from the Church Administrator.

## Policy elements

### Grievance definition

We define grievance as any complaint, problem or concern of a staff member or volunteer regarding their workplace, job or co-worker relationships. Staff and volunteers can file grievances for any of the following reasons:

- Workplace harassment
- Health and safety
- Manager behaviour
- Adverse changes in employment conditions

This list is not exhaustive. However, staff and volunteers should try to resolve less important issues informally before they resort to a formal grievance.

Staff and volunteers who file grievances can:

- Reach out to their direct Line Manager, Church Ministry or Group Leader, Elder or Trustee.
- File a grievance form explaining the situation in detail

- Refuse to attend formal meetings on their own
- Appeal on any formal decision

Staff and volunteers who face allegation have the right to:

- Receive a copy of the allegations against them
- Respond to the allegations
- Appeal on any formal decision

New Day Church is obliged to:

- Have a formal grievance procedure in place
- Communicate the procedure
- Investigate all grievances promptly
- Treat all staff and volunteers who file grievances equally
- Preserve confidentiality as far as possible throughout the process, unless the law dictates otherwise.
- Use all reasonable endeavours to resolve grievances
- Respect all other relevant policies e.g. Equal Opportunities, Bullying and Harrassment, when staff and volunteers file grievances with the charity or external agencies.

## Procedures

Staff and Volunteers are encouraged to talk to each other to resolve their problems. The Church Leadership Board Role Document outlines a biblical approach for members of the church to address “serious concerns” about a member of the Board or Trustees and Elders (Section 13). Serious concerns are defined below. The following procedures are consistent with that approach.

If a conversation with the relevant person does not lead to a resolution then the following grievance process can be followed.

1. Communicate informally with the Line Manager or Leader (A Leader may be an overseeing Church Ministry or Small Group Leader or Elder or Trustee). The Line Manager/Leader will try to resolve the problem. When staff and volunteers want to complain about their Line Manager/Leader, they should first try to discuss the matter and resolve it between them. In that case, they’re advised to request an informal meeting. Line Managers/Leaders should try to resolve any grievance as quickly as possible.
2. If an initial meeting does not resolve the matter, it is appropriate to arrange a further meeting with the Line Manager/Leader and take another person along with you to this meeting. If this meeting does not lead to a resolution, they should refer to the Elders of New Day Church and cooperate with all other procedures.
3. If the grievance relates to a Line Manager/Leader’s behaviour that can result in disciplinary action (e.g. sexual harassment or violence), staff and volunteers should refer directly to an Elder, Trustee or the next level Line Manager. Refer to the Bullying and Harassment Policy available in the Church Office.

4. Accommodate the procedure outlined below. The Board should follow this procedure:

1. Ask staff member/volunteer to fill out a grievance form
2. Talk with the staff member/volunteer to ensure the matter is understood completely
3. Provide the staff member/volunteer who faces allegations with a copy of the grievance
4. Organize mediation procedures (e.g. arranging a formal meeting)
5. Investigate the matter or ask the help of an investigator when needed
6. Keep staff and volunteers informed throughout the process
7. Communicate the formal decision to all staff and volunteers involved
8. Take actions to ensure the formal decision is adhered to
9. Deal with appeals by gathering more information and investigating further
10. Keep accurate records
11. If the issue of concern is serious, as defined in the Leadership Board Role Description (reprinted below) and relates to a Trustee or Elder and the complainant is not satisfied with the resolution of the matter then they can take it to External Board of Reference for their consideration and investigation. The Church Administrator will provide details of who to contact.

Note that if the grievance concerns a member of the Board, that person will take no part in the resolution procedure, except as party to the grievance.

This procedure may vary according to the nature of a grievance. For example, if a staff member is found guilty of racial discrimination, the charity will begin disciplinary procedures.

## **Definition of Issues of Serious Concern**

Issues of serious concern about a member of the Board of Trustees and Elders, as referenced in Procedures above (first paragraph), are limited to:

1. Illegal or immoral behaviour
2. Physical, sexual and racial abuse of others.
3. Emotional abuse of others where such behaviour is sustained over a period of time  
For example: contempt, shaming, bullying, name-calling, marginalising, blaming and blackmailing.
4. Behaviour which dishonours either God's name and reputation or that of the Church.
5. Beliefs which have been expressed which contravene the Church Statement of Faith.