

UNIFORM ARCHDIOCESAN GRIEVANCE POLICY

PURPOSE:

The purpose of this policy is to provide employees* of the Archdiocese of Galveston-Houston and its various parishes and schools with a uniform, orderly process for the prompt and equitable resolution of grievances. This policy supersedes and replaces all previous policies and statements regarding the institution and processing of grievances within the Archdiocese.

SCOPE:

Employees may grieve any dispute pertaining to the application or interpretation of policies relating to their employment, including any dispute pertaining to the application or interpretation of a formal employment contract, if one exists. Nothing contained herein shall be construed to vary the terms of any such employment contract or the employment-at-will relationship, as the case may be.

INFORMAL RESOLUTION/CONCILIATION:

It is the intent of this policy to resolve employment disputes at the lowest possible administrative level and in a cooperative Christian atmosphere. The process is not intended to be adversarial in nature. To that end, prior to using the steps set forth below, the employee shall meet with his/her immediate supervisor to discuss the dispute and attempt conciliation, if at all possible. Additionally, neither the employee nor the employer shall be represented by legal counsel during any phase of the conciliation or grievance process.

PLEASE NOTE: Regarding the computation of time in this process, the timelines of the Grievance Process have been amended effective March 17, 2004 and shall be based on work days of a standard work week (Monday-Friday).

GRIEVANCE PROCESS:

If a satisfactory resolution is not reached at the conciliation level, the employee shall set forth his/her grievance in writing (on a form to be provided through the Archdiocesan Director of Human Resources – 713-652-8266 or HR@archgh.org, setting forth the nature of the grievance, all relevant details and the remedy sought. The following procedures shall then be utilized:

Level One: The written grievance shall be presented to the employee's Level One administrator within ten (10) work days after discussion of the complaint with the immediate supervisor. The Level One administrator shall be:

- (a) For all persons employed directly by the Archdiocese, other than Department Heads, their unit supervisor or department head.
- (b) For Department Heads employed directly by the Archdiocese, the Director of the Secretariat or its equivalent
- (c) For all persons employed at a Parish or Parish school, the Pastor.

*Employees of non-Archdiocesan-owned schools are not employees of the Archdiocese and therefore are not covered by this process.

(d) For persons, other than principals, employed at Archdiocesan-owned Regional schools, the school principal.

(e) For principals at Archdiocesan-owned Regional schools, the Archdiocesan Superintendent of Schools.

Within a reasonable time, but no later than fifteen (15) work days after receipt of the written grievance, the Level One administrator shall meet with the employee to hear the grievance and receive any other information that either party deems relevant. Following such meeting, the Level One administrator shall issue a written decision. If either party to the grievance is dissatisfied with the decision they may appeal to the next level. If no decision is received within fifteen (15) workdays after receipt of the written grievance by the Level One administrator, the grievant may appeal to the next level.

Level Two: Either party to the grievance may appeal to their Level Two administrator, in writing (on the form provided), within five (5) work days of their receipt of the Level One decision or, for the grievant, the expiration of the time for issuance of such decision. The Level Two administrator shall be:

(a) For all persons employed directly by the Archdiocese, other than Department Heads, the Director of the Secretariat or its equivalent.

(b) For all persons employed directly by the Archdiocese as Department Heads, the Moderator of the Curia.

(c) For all persons employed at a Parish or Parish school, the regional Vicar (i.e., the Vicar of the Vicariate in which the Parish is located).

(d) For persons, other than principals, employed at a Archdiocesan-owned Regional school, the regional Vicar (i.e., the Vicar of the Vicariate in which the school is located).

(e) For principals employed at Archdiocesan-owned Regional schools, the regional Vicar (i.e., the Vicar of the Vicariate in which the school is located).

Within a reasonable time, but no later than fifteen (15) work days after receipt of the written appeal, the Level Two administrator shall separately meet with both parties to the grievance to hear the grievance and consider all materials presented at Level One as well as any other information either party deems relevant. It is important that the Level Two administrator contact the Level One administrator to gain further insight into the circumstances and issues involved in the grievance and the resultant decision at Level One. Following this discussion and the meeting with the employee(s) involved, the Level Two administrator shall issue a written decision. If either party to the grievance is dissatisfied with the decision they may appeal to the next level. If no decision is received within fifteen (15) workdays after receipt of the written grievance by the Level Two administrator, the party appealing at this level may then appeal to the next level.

Level Three: Appeals from Level Two must be made in writing (on the form provided), to the Archdiocesan Grievance committee, which shall consist of the Chancellor of the Archdiocese, who shall be the permanent Chair, along with two other members chosen by him from amongst Archdiocesan administrators and/or the Archdiocesan school board, at his discretion. In the event of a

complaint against or the absence of the Chancellor of the Archdiocese, the Archdiocesan Director of Human Resources will facilitate the formation of the Committee. In the event the Archdiocesan Director of Human Resources is one of the parties in the complaint, another Director shall be nominated by the Archbishop to facilitate the formation of the Committee. Appeals to the Archdiocesan Grievance Committee must be made within five (5) work days of the receipt of the Level Two decision by either party or the expiration of the time for issuance of such decision.

The Archdiocesan Grievance Committee shall meet when requested to hear and decide employee grievances, but in no event shall a grievance be heard any later than twenty (20) work days from the date of the Chancellor's receipt of the written appeal. The Committee shall meet with the employee to hear the grievance and consider all material presented at Level One and Level Two, as the case may be, as well as any other information the Committee deems relevant. The Committee shall issue a written decision within ten (10) work days of the meeting, which shall become final and binding on all parties unless review by the Archbishop is requested, in writing, within five (5) work days of receipt of the decision.

Review - Review by the Archbishop shall be on the basis of written submissions only. The Archbishop may affirm the decision of the Grievance Committee or take any other action he deems appropriate, which shall be final, for all purposes. The Archbishop will act within twenty (20) work days of his receipt of the request for review, providing written notice to both parties.

PROCEDURAL ISSUES:

While the Grievance Process is designed to accommodate all employment relationships that may exist within the Archdiocese, it is understood that situations may arise which require flexibility. Any issues regarding the use of Level One or Level Two, or the appropriate administrator at those levels, shall be resolved by the Director of the Archdiocesan Human Resources Office.

COMPUTATION OF TIME:

The timelines of the Grievance Process shall be based on workdays of a standard workweek (Monday-Friday).

NON-RETALIATION:

The Grievance Process is intended to achieve a peaceful and final resolution of employment controversies. Employees must be able to utilize the process, in good faith, without fear of reprisal. Retaliation, of any kind, is absolutely prohibited.

APPEAL PROCESS

	CONCILIATION PROCEDURE	GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE Written request must be made at each level			
FOR THOSE EMPLOYED:	Discuss Dispute for Resolution	LEVEL 1	LEVEL 2	LEVEL 3	LEVEL 4
Directly by the Archdiocese (other than Department Head)	Immediate Supervisor	Unit Supervisor or Department Head	Director of Secretariat or its equivalent	Archdioces an Grievance Committee	Review by Archbishop
Directly by the Archdiocese Department Head	Immediate Supervisor	Director of Secretariat or its equivalent	Moderator of the Curia	"	"
By a parish or parish school	Immediate Supervisor	Pastor	Regional Vicar	"	"
By a Archdiocesan-owned Regional School* (other than Principal)	Principal	Principal	Regional Vicar	"	"
As Principal of a Archdiocesan-owned Regional School*	Local Board	Archdiocesan Superintendent of Schools	Regional Vicar	"	"

Any review by the Archbishop of the decision of the Grievance Committee must be requested in writing within 5 workdays of the receipt of the decision.

* Non-Archdiocesan-owned schools are not covered by this process.