**Grievance Policy**

**Change History**

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| Issue | Date | Summary of Changes | Initial |
| A | Mar 21 | Revised policy created by Birketts | **ED** |
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**Grievance Policy**

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**1. Introduction**

1.1 This procedure does not form part of any employee’s contract of employment and HIL may amend it at any time.

1.2 This policy applies to employees regardless of length of service. Every HIL employee has a right to raise matters of concern relating to their employer, work, working environment, or working relationships. This grievance policy and procedure has been designed to ensure clarity for both employees and managers about how to raise and respond to a grievance, including the stages that should be followed, and to assist in providing a resolution as quickly and as fairly as possible.

1.3 Most grievances can be resolved quickly and informally through discussions with line managers (or other manager if the issue concerns an immediate line manager). If this does not resolve the issue then employees should initiate this formal procedure. This document emphasises that the purpose of the procedure is, wherever possible, to establish a mutual resolution.

**2. Equal Opportunities**

2.1 HIL expects employees to adhere to this policy in line with HIL's Equal Opportunities Policy and any of its obligations under equality legislation. In particular, reasonable adjustments will be made during all stages of the process for disabled employees.

2.2 Right to be Accompanied

Employees who have raised a grievance have a statutory right to be accompanied at all formal meetings by a colleague or trade union representative. The representative may:

* take notes on the employee’s behalf
* address the meeting and sum up the employees’ case, but not answer questions on their behalf
* confer privately during the meeting (indeed all parties may seek an adjournment to discuss matters privately if necessary)

When an employee has requested to be accompanied, but their representative is unable to make the date set, the employee may suggest another reasonable date within 5 working days of the original meeting date. The companion will be allowed reasonable paid time off from duties.

2.3 Mediation

In some cases, the parties involved in the grievance may be invited to partake in mediation to resolve the issue(s). Mediation involves an impartial person assisting two or more individuals or groups to reach a solution that is acceptable to everyone. It is completely voluntary and confidential.

The process of mediation is forward looking and its purpose is not to determine who was right or wrong. The mediator may talk to both sides separately or together and will ask questions that help to uncover underlying problems and help to clarify the options for resolving the conflict. Mediators do not make judgements or determine outcomes.

Mediation can help individuals empathise with those they are in conflict with, giving participants an insight into their own behaviour and helping them to develop the skills to resolve difficulties for themselves.

Mediation can be effective when used at the initial phase of any disagreement, before conflict escalates; early intervention can prevent both sides from becoming entrenched. It can also be used to rebuild relationships once the grievance process has ended.

**In some circumstances it is inappropriate i.e. where the matter is too serious, the manager does not have the authority to provide a resolution, to deal with the grievance informally. It may be more appropriate to go straight to the formal stages of the procedure.**

**3. Formal Procedure**

3.1 Written grievance

An employee may raise a grievance by submitting details of their grievance formally in writing to their manager. This should set out the nature of the complaint, including any relevant facts, dates, and names of individuals involved so that we can investigate it.

Where the grievance is against their line manager or senior management and the employee feels unable to address the issue directly with the person concerned, the employee should go to another manager.

3.2 Meeting

On receipt of the grievance the manager will invite the employee to a meeting to discuss their issues. This meeting should be convened normally within a week of receiving the grievance. If an employee of their companion cannot attend at the time specified the employee should let HIL know as soon as possible and HIL will try, within reason, to arrange an alternative time.

During the meeting it may become apparent to the manager that it is necessary to undertake further investigation. If this occurs, an adjournment should be called. After any additional investigations have taken place the meeting will usually be reconvened.

Decisions should be provided, in writing, within a week of the meeting where possible. This may include any further action that HIL intends to take to resolve the grievance. At HIL’s discretion, it may also convene another meeting in order to talk the employee through the rationale behind any decisions made.

**4. Appeals**

4.1 If an employee does not feel that their grievance has been resolved to their satisfaction they may appeal in writing to the CEO (or Executive Chairman if the CEO handled the grievance process being appealed), stating their full grounds of appeal, within one week of the date that the original decision was sent or given to them.

4.2 HIL will hold an appeal meeting, normally within two weeks of receiving the appeal. A more senior manager who has not previously been involved in the case will deal with this impartially. The employee has the right to bring a colleague or trade union representative as a companion.

4.3 A final decision will be confirmed in writing, usually within one week of the appeal hearing. There is no further right of appeal.