

## **PEGNL Grievance Process Policy (updated October 16, 2017)**

### **Policy Rationale**

To establish a process for a fair, rational, and efficient resolution of disputes among employees, between supervisors and employees, between employees and volunteers, and among volunteers. It is also meant to address otherwise alleged code of conduct violations by staff or volunteers.

### **Applies To**

All PEGNL employees and volunteers in their PEGNL related employee work or volunteer activities.

### **Application**

Any employee or volunteer can use this procedure to make or attempt resolution "an alleged violation of PEGNL policies including but not limited to the code of conduct" (complaint) for any staff or volunteers.

### **Informal Resolution**

Employees and volunteers are encouraged to first attempt to resolve a complaint locally and informally. Staff members may also bring a complaint to the attention of their supervisors as soon as possible and discuss the concern. Supervisors should meet with the employee in a timely fashion in order to resolve the complaint. Similarly, volunteers may bring a complaint to the attention of a committee chair.

### **Employee and Volunteer Relations Assistance**

The Chief Operating Officer (COO) is available during the informal resolution process. The COO can help if the employee or volunteer is not comfortable approaching the party against which a complaint is being made, or approaching a supervisor. The COO will meet with the employee or volunteer, the party against which the complaint is being made, or both if appropriate, to help resolve the complaint. The COO can also help with policy interpretation, employee and volunteer rights, and the formal grievance procedure.

If the complaint is being made against the COO, the term CEO is to be substituted for the COO in the previous two paragraphs.

### **Representation**

An employee or volunteer can act as his or her own representative in any step of this procedure. If representation is requested, the employee or volunteer can choose an employee or volunteer representative who does not have a vested interest in the outcome.

### **Retaliation Protection**

Employees and volunteers are not to be discriminated against for using this process. If an employee or volunteer alleges to have been discriminated against for exercising rights under this policy, the complaint may be moved to Step III of the formal grievance procedure. PEGNL does not condone acts of discrimination against any employee or volunteer as a result of his or her involvement in this process.

The parties to a complaint are required, at all stages of this policy and procedure, to maintain confidentiality in relation to the complaint. The parties must not disclose, by any form of communication, either the fact or the substance of the allegations or issues to anyone not defined through the grievance process.

A person must not victimize or otherwise subject another person to detrimental action as a consequence of that person raising, providing information about, or otherwise being involved in the resolution of a complaint under these procedures.

Any breach of either the confidentiality or non-victimization requirements will be treated seriously by PEGNL, and may result in disciplinary action. Any such breach will be investigated.

### **Procedure:**

#### **Step I**

If informal attempts fail, an employee or volunteer may file a formal complaint. The complaint must be in writing, signed by the employee or volunteer, and submitted to the COO within 3 working days of the incident causing the complaint. The complaint must identify the right or condition that is alleged to have been violated, provide details of the facts and outline the remedy sought. Complaints that do not include these criteria may be rejected.

Within 3 working days from receipt of the written complaint, the COO will meet with the employee or volunteer. The COO will provide the employee or volunteer with a written response within 2 working days from the date of the meeting.

#### **Step II**

If the complaint is not resolved at Step I, the employee or the volunteer may submit a written appeal to the CEO within 3 working days from receipt of the Step I answer. If the complaint is against the COO, the employee or volunteer should proceed to filing the complaint with the CEO.

The CEO will meet with the parties involved within 3 working days from receipt of the written appeal. The CEO will investigate and provide a written decision to the employee or volunteer within 2 working days from the close of the meeting. This decision reached shall be final.

### **Step III - Special Review**

If an employee's or volunteer's complaint is against the CEO or a Board member, the employee or volunteer is encouraged to resolve the issue through the informal resolution step or follow the process defined in Step I of the formal process. If the complaint is not resolved through this process, or if the employee or volunteer is not comfortable filing the complaint with the COO, the employee or volunteer may contact the current Chair of the PEGNL Board of Directors requesting a special review by the Board of the matter, within 3 working days of the incident causing the complaint.

If an employee or volunteer alleges to have been discriminated against for exercising rights under this policy, the employee or volunteer may contact the current Chair of the PEGNL Board of Directors requesting a special review of the matter if it is against the CEO or a Board member, or contact the CEO if the CEO or Board member is not involved.

### **Other processes**

This grievance process is not meant to remove the right or responsibility of any staff member, volunteer or PEGNL to use any other processes that may apply.