

# DEPAUL UNIVERSITY

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## Employee Workplace Issues Resolution

**Category:** Human Resources

**Responsible Department:** Employee Relations & Equal Employment Opportunity

**Responsible Officer:** Vice President, Human Resources

**Effective Date:** 2/17/2022

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### Policy Summary

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The purpose of this policy is to establish the procedures for the resolution of employees' work-related issues.

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### Scope

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This policy affects the following groups of the University:

- Hiring/Supervising Managers
- Full-Time Staff
- Part-Time Staff
- Student Employees

This policy affects all members of the above groups.

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### Policy

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DePaul University is committed to treating all DePaul employees respectfully, fairly and equitably. Employees who believe that they have been treated in a manner inconsistent with the university's mission, established policies, procedures or code of conduct may question or challenge a decision or action through the university's Employee Workplace Issues Resolution procedure detailed below.

This policy shall not apply to the following:

- Policy decisions or resolutions made by the president (or designee) that affect a group of employees equally (e.g., norms for salary increases, benefit schedules, etc.)
- Decisions made on the recommendation of a duly appointed board or committee that affect a group of employees equally
- Issues related to harassment and/or discrimination. Employees should direct issues related to sexual harassment to the Office of Gender & Equity and discrimination to Employee Relations & Equal Employment Opportunity

- Final decisions regarding termination of employment

*No person, including parties and witnesses, exercising their rights under this policy or participating in the procedures provided by this policy shall be subject to discrimination, retaliation, or threat of retaliation as a result. If such parties believe that they have suffered any reprisals for using this procedure they should notify Employee Relations & Equal Employment Opportunity. An allegation of discrimination, retaliation or a threat of retaliation shall be investigated.*

### [Non-Retaliation Policy](#)

**Employees and managers may consult with an Employee Relations & Equal Employment Opportunity representative as needed throughout the process.**

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## **Procedures**

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Employees and their managers are expected to attempt to work together directly to resolve workplace issues. If the issues are not resolved at this level, the employee is encouraged to discuss the workplace issues with the next higher level of administration and/or Human Resources-Employee Relations & Equal Employment Opportunity. If these efforts do not result in resolution of the workplace issues, or if the employee so chooses at the outset, he/she may choose to proceed to the formal process.

### **Formal Issues Resolution Procedure**

If workplace issues cannot be resolved with the manager or at the department level the employee may choose to consult with an Employee Relations & Equal Employment Opportunity representative in Human Resources.

The Employee Relations & Equal Employment Opportunity representative will attempt to resolve the issues through clarification and interpretation for written policies and procedures, providing advice on the best approach an employee can take to address issues or concerns, and describing alternative resolutions to help bring specific work-related concerns to a satisfactory close for all concerned.

An employee who believes their workplace issues have not been resolved will be instructed to complete the Employee Relations Complaint Intake form (link to be included). Employee Relations & Equal Employment Opportunity will investigate the workplace issue, including gathering data, reviewing documents, and interviewing employees. Based on the investigation findings, the Employee Relations & Equal Employment Opportunity representative will make recommendations concerning actions to be taken by all involved parties.

If the findings involve a faculty member who manages staff, the Employee Relations & Equal Employment Opportunity representative will consult with the Dean and section 4.4 Disciplinary Actions Including Dismissal or Suspension for Misconduct of the faculty handbook may be followed. If the findings involve a staff member who is a manager, the Employee Relations & Equal Employment Opportunity representative will consult with the next higher level of management and discuss recommendations.

## **Grievance Procedure**

An employee may choose to submit a grievance only after completion of the formal process; and if a specific violation of one or more of the university's policies has occurred. The Vice President of Human Resources or designee must be consulted throughout this process. University policies are not subject to challenge under this policy.

All reasonable efforts must be made to adhere to the timelines specified in the administration of this process. If the employee does not initiate a subsequent step listed below within the designated time period, the matter will be considered closed with the resolution identified at the end of the last completed step.

### **Step 1. Initiation**

The employee presents the issues in writing to their immediate manager and to the Vice President of Human Resources for review and response. The complaint intake form completed in the formal process can be used along with any additional documentation.

In instances where the immediate manager designated to review and respond to the employee's issues is the subject of the underlying issues, or directly involved, the employee may initiate the grievance process with the person designated as the next level administrator in the overall reporting structure who will serve as the management designee.

### **Step 2. Meeting of Parties**

The employee's manager or appropriate management designee will arrange a meeting to take place between all parties (employee, respondent and manager) involved or named in the complaint intake form within five (5) working days of receipt of the documentation.

Prior to the meeting, those named in the complaint intake form documents must respond to the employee's issue in writing through the manager or management designee in an attempt to resolve the issue.

If the employee is not satisfied with the resolution or if they fail to receive a written response within the stated time period), the employee may proceed to the next step of the process.

### **Step 3. Administrative Review**

If the employee requests this step, it must be initiated within five (5) working days of the conclusion of Step 2.

The employee will present their original written document from Step 1, along with the manager's response (or appropriate next level administrator's response), to the next administrative level and to the Vice President, of Human Resources. The employee should also include a letter specifically outlining why the responses to the identified issues by the manager or manager designee are in the employee's opinion, unacceptable resolutions to the employee's issues.

The next level administrator must respond to the employee in writing with a response and proposed resolution within five (5) working days of receipt of the documentation.

#### **Step 4. Grievance Review Board**

If, after engaging in the previous steps, an employee does not believe that the identified issues have been resolved, they may petition that their case be heard by the Grievance Review Board by submitting a letter of request to the Vice President, of Human Resources for a hearing. The letter must be submitted within 10 working days of the conclusion of Step 3.

Within 10 working days of receipt of the letter, The Vice President, of Human Resources will notify and convene the Grievance Review Board members to hear the case. Given that this is an internal process, attorneys are not permitted to attend.

The Grievance Review Board will review the documentation submitted in the previous steps and may, at its own discretion, request additional information, documents, or statements from the employee, the employee's manager, or other individuals with knowledge of the facts of the dispute. Such requests must be made within 10 business days after the first meeting.

The Grievance Review Board will prepare a written decision, which is subject to review and modification by the Executive Vice President, in consultation with appropriate University officials. This written decision is final.

The final written decision, following such review and modification (if any), shall be sent to the employee, the employee's manager, and the Vice President, of Human Resources within five working days of the Executive Vice President's review.

The final written decisions involving faculty who manage staff shall be sent to the employee, the employee's manager, and the Dean within five working days of the Executive Vice President's review.

The Vice President, of Human Resources or designee will follow up with all parties within 30 days of the decision to ensure that all parties are adhering to the agreed resolution.

#### **The Grievance Review Board**

- The Grievance Review Board shall consist of seven (7) board members: Three (3) Staff Council appointees, two (2) exempt and one (1) non-exempt, two (2) non-Staff Council employees appointed by the Executive Vice President, one (1) exempt and one (1) non-exempt, and two (2) Faculty Council appointees who will each serve two (2)-year terms. (Note: An alternate may be appointed to replace someone on the review board if a board member has a conflict of interest that precludes him or her from serving as an objective member of the board. Three (3) board alternates for this purpose shall be designated, one chosen by Staff Council, one selected by the EVP, and one chosen by Faculty Council.)
- The Vice President, of Human Resources, or designee, will serve as a facilitator of the board processes.

- All proceedings of the board are confidential. The meeting will be closed with the following exceptions: the involved parties and those persons whom the board deem necessary to make its decision.

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## **Records Management**

Copies of all documents and/or notes taken during the formal and grievance procedures will be kept in a separate Human Resources file. Should disciplinary action result from the investigation, documentation of such disciplinary action will become part of the relevant employee's personnel record.

## **Follow-up**

It is the employee's responsibility to notify Employee Relations & Equal Employment Opportunity if the recommended resolution actions are not followed. Employee Relations & Equal Employment Opportunity will then consult and notify the Vice President, of Human Resources.

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## **Divisional Collaborations**

None

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## **Contact Information**

### **Office of Human Resources**

#### **Mailing Address:**

1 East Jackson Boulevard  
Chicago, Illinois 60604

#### **Office Location:**

14 East Jackson Boulevard  
13th Floor  
Chicago, Illinois 60604  
(312) 362-8500

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## **Appendices**

None

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## **History/Revisions**

Origination Date: 06/06/1997  
Last Amended Date: 02/17/2022  
Next Review Date: N/A