

## **AEGIS Complaints Procedure**

(regarding AEGIS employees, trustees, contractors and anyone acting on behalf of AEGIS)

This complaints procedure is intended for anyone wishing to make a complaint about an AEGIS employee, trustee, contractor, or anyone acting on behalf of AEGIS. It might be, for example, concerns about poor practice within AEGIS or its inspection process, or the conduct of an AEGIS employee or someone acting on behalf of AEGIS.

In the event of someone wishing to make a complaint, it is preferable for the grievance to be satisfactorily resolved as close to the individual and their line manager as possible. It is understood, however, that this is not always possible and that a formal procedure is required to ensure the swift and fair resolution.

Time scales have been fixed to ensure that grievances are dealt with quickly, however these may be extended by agreement.

### **Stage 1**

Any complaints should be raised with the individual's line manager, which will be one of the following:

Chair of Trustees  
Board of Trustees  
Executive Officer  
Head of Inspections

If the line manager is unable to resolve the matter at that time then a formal written grievance letter should be submitted. The manager should then respond within **2 working days** to the grievance unless an extended period of time is agreed upon by both parties. The response will give a full written explanation of the manager's decision and who to appeal to if still aggrieved.

### **Stage 2**

In most instances, AEGIS would expect the manager's decision to be final and for the matter to come to a close. However, in some circumstances the complainant may remain aggrieved and can appeal against the decision of the manager concerned.

The appeal must be made within ten working days of the original response to the grievance, in writing, to the Board of Trustees. A formal response and full explanation will be given in writing **within 7 days**.

### **Stage 3**

Where both parties agree that there would be some merit in referring the matter to a third party for advice, conciliation or arbitration, arrangements will then be made to find a mutually acceptable third party.

#### **Using mediation**

An independent third party or mediator can sometimes help resolve grievance issues before it is necessary to invoke the formal procedure. Mediation is a voluntary process where the mediator helps two or more people in dispute to attempt to reach an agreement. Any agreement comes from those in dispute, not from the mediator. The mediator is not there to judge, to say one person is right and the other wrong, or to tell those involved in the mediation what they should do. The mediator is in charge of the process of seeking to resolve the problem but not the outcome.

There are rules for when mediation is appropriate but it can be used:

- for conflict involving colleagues of a similar job or grade, or between a line manager and their staff
- at any stage in the conflict as long as any ongoing formal procedures are put in abeyance
- to rebuild relationships after a formal dispute has been resolved
- to address a range of issues, including relationship breakdown, personality clashes, communication problems and bullying and harassment.

Mediation is not part of AEGIS's formal grievance procedure. However, if both parties agree to mediation, then the grievance procedure can be suspended in an attempt to resolve the grievance through that route. If mediation is not successful, then the grievance procedure can be re-commenced.

### **Stage 4**

Should the decision of mediation at stage 3 fail to settle the grievance, the complainant has the right to pursue the grievance through the courts.

#### **Contact details**

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