

STAFF DISPUTE RESOLUTION POLICY ERJ 6.18.1

INTRODUCTION

Open communication and feedback are regarded as essential elements of a satisfying and productive work environment.

Edmund Rice Justice Aotearoa New Zealand Trust encourages its employees and volunteers to resolve any issues or concerns that they may have at the earliest opportunity with each other or, failing that, the Chair.

The preferred process involves employees and volunteers resolving issues to their satisfaction internally, without feeling they have to refer to external organisations or to authorities for assistance.

PURPOSE

The purpose of this document is to provide an avenue through which employees and volunteers, and their managers, can resolve work-related complaints as they arise.

POLICY

Edmund Rice Justice Aotearoa New Zealand Trust will establish mechanisms to promote fast and efficient resolution of workplace issues.

Employees and volunteers should feel comfortable discussing issues with the Chair in accordance with the procedures outlined below.

All formal avenues for handling of grievances will be fully documented and the employee/volunteer's wishes will be taken into account in determining the appropriate steps and actions.

No employee will be intimidated or unfairly treated in any respect if they utilise this Policy to resolve an issue.

This Policy applies to permanent and part-time paid employees and to volunteer workers.

AUTHORISATION

Chair

2015

Edmund Rice Justice Aotearoa New Zealand Trust

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Drafted by	James Devereaux	Approved by Board on	
Responsible person	ERJANZ Trust Board	Scheduled review date	March 2017

STAFF DISPUTE RESOLUTION PROCEDURES ERJ 6.18.1

RESPONSIBILITIES

It is the responsibility of **Board** to ensure that:

- They identify, prevent and address potential problems before they become formal grievances;
- They are aware of, and are committed to the principles of communicating and information sharing with their employees and volunteers;
- All decisions relating to employment practices are made with consideration given to the ramifications for the individual, as well as the organisation in general;
- Any grievance is handled in the most appropriate manner at the earliest opportunity;
- All employees and volunteers are treated fairly and without fear of intimidation.

It is the responsibility of **Employees (including Volunteers)** to ensure that:

- They attempt to resolve any issues through their immediate supervisor and through internal processes at the earliest opportunity.

It is the responsibility of the **Board** to ensure that:

- All employees and volunteers are aware of their obligations and responsibilities in relation to communication and information sharing with their employees;
- Ongoing support and guidance is provided to all employees in relation to employment and communication issues;
- All employees and volunteers are aware of their obligations and responsibilities in relation to handling grievances;
- Any grievance that comes to the attention of Chair is handled in the most appropriate manner at the earliest opportunity.

PROCEDURES

Employment Practices

The Board should be aware of the possible ramifications of their actions when dealing with employee/volunteer issues. They must ensure that all employees and volunteers are treated with fairness, equality and respect.

If there are any doubts or queries in relation to how to deal with a particular set of circumstances, Chair should contact the Board for advice at the earliest opportunity.

Where a grievance or dispute has been brought to a Chair's attention, they should assess whether the employee involved is covered by an Award or Agreement, and if so should refer to that document for grievance procedures. If the employee or volunteer involved is not covered by such a document, the guidelines below should be followed.

Grievances and Dispute Resolution

An employee or volunteer who considers that they have a dispute or grievance (that they have not been able to resolve directly with any other involved party) should raise the matter with the Chair as a first step towards resolution. The two parties should discuss the matter openly and work together to achieve a desired outcome.

The Chair should check for clarification of the issue to ensure they fully understand the complainant's concerns. The Chair should follow the standard procedure of offering the employee or volunteer the opportunity to have a support person at the discussion, ensuring they follow the steps outlined below:

- If more than one person is present, establish the role of each person.
- Outline the process that is to be followed.
- Inform the parties that any information obtained in the conduct of the review is confidential.
- Listen to the complainant and diagnose the problem.
- Take accurate and detailed notes of all conversations (including dates, people involved) and attach any supporting documentation.
- If deemed necessary, provide the employee/volunteers with a written summary of the meeting and clarification of the next steps to be taken.

The Chair must ensure that the manner in which the meeting is conducted will be conducive to maintaining positive working relationships, and will provide a fair, objective and independent analysis of the situation.

All parties are to maintain complete confidentiality at all times.

If the matter is not resolved and the employee or volunteer wishes to pursue it, the issue should be discussed with the Chair, then, if necessary, the Board. Again, the matter is to be discussed openly and objectively with management to ensure it is fully understood. If the grievance/dispute is one of a confidential or serious nature involving the employee or volunteer's Chair, the complainant may discuss the issue directly with the Board. The board reserves absolute discretion as to making a final decision as to how the grievance or dispute will be resolved.

RELATED DOCUMENTS

- Board Dispute Resolution Policy
- [Bullying Policy](#)
- [Anti-Discrimination Policy](#)

AUTHORISATION

Chair

2015

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