

# GRIEVANCE POLICY



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### Table of Contents

Ser	Content	Pages
1	Statement of Policy	2
2	Definition of Grievance	2
3	Our Commitment	2-3
4	Individuals Covered under the Policy	3
5	What to do If You have a Grievance	4
6	Our Internal Grievance Procedure	4-6
7	Our External Grievance Procedure	6-7
8	Summary	7
9	Mediation	7
10	Conclusion	7

## Statement of Policy

USS group is committed to maintaining a collegial work environment in which all individuals are treated with respect and dignity. Grievances will be treated seriously and with sensitivity, having due regards to procedural fairness and confidentiality. No employee shall be subjected to discrimination or adverse treatment for participating in a grievance procedure.

USS respects all persons alleging improper conduct providing processes for fair and transparent resolution. USS ensures that personnel, who report wrongdoings in good faith are provided protection against any retaliation for making such reports, such as shielding them from unwarranted or otherwise inappropriate disciplinary measures, and that matters raised are examined and acted upon without undue delay.

*USS's Grievance Policy meets all aspects of the International Code of Conduct Grievance Procedures (<https://www.icoca.ch>)*

## Definition of Grievance

A “basic grievance” is defined as a claim that the USS has violated a published policy in the manner in which an employee was treated. Basic grievances do not involve claims of: Possible discrimination on the basis of race, color, sex (including sexual harassment or sexual orientation), religion, creed, age, handicap, national origin, or status as a veteran. Employees wishing to pursue claims of such discrimination must contact the USS HR Manager at the USS HQ.

Disputes over salary grades or salary/rate of pay, or disputes over a supervisor’s judgment regarding job performance or professional competence should be brought to the employee’s HR administrator. Although problems of this nature are not covered by the Basic Grievance Policy, an employee with these concerns is encouraged to discuss them with his/her supervisor or the Human Resources Department at USS HQ, or the appropriate contact within the USS HQ at the Program Management level.

The Office of Human Resources determines whether or not a dispute is within the scope of this policy.

## Our Commitments

We pledge to make sure that employees who in good faith report wrongdoings are protected from facing consequences for doing so. We commit to swiftly, impartially, and with appropriate regard for confidentiality evaluate all claims. Except where forbidden or protected by relevant law, all records of grievances and their conclusions shall be retained on file. A Competent Authority may request access to these documents, and access will be granted. All matters raised shall be examined/reviewed and handled without delay.

## **Protection against Retaliation**

USS Management takes necessary steps to make sure that people involved in a grievance are not victimized by anyone for coming forward with the grievance or for helping to sort it out. USS does not retaliate against an individual who makes a report of mistreatment, nor permit any employee to do so. Retaliation is a very serious violation of this policy and should be reported immediately. Any individual found to have retaliated against an individual for reporting harassment, or against anyone participating in the investigation of a complaint, may be subject to appropriate disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment.

## **Confidentiality**

Any allegation of harassment brought to the attention of either the Office of Human Resources, the Project Manager, or Senior Management will be promptly investigated. Confidentiality will be maintained throughout the investigation process to the extent practical and appropriate under the circumstances.

## **Impartiality**

Everyone has an opportunity to present their viewpoint. Nobody makes any assumptions or does anything before gathering and weighing all pertinent data. All parties can have assistance or representation if they so want or require it.

## **Sensitivity**

The people who help sort out grievances have been specially trained to treat all grievances sensitively. You won't be laughed at or treated badly for making a grievance, or for explaining your side of the story.

## **Timely**

Management aims to deal with all grievances as quickly as possible. There are time limits for the different stages

## **Individuals Covered Under the Policy**

This policy covers all employees. USS acknowledges grievances by employees or by non-employees who conduct business with USS. Any employee who feels they have been subjected to mistreatment should communicate the matter immediately and directly to either the Office of Human Resources, the Project Manager, or Senior Management. USS investigates any incident of alleged mistreatment by a person who is not an employee of USS to the extent practical and will take any action it deems appropriate after evaluating all circumstances. USS encourages reporting of all incidents of harassment, regardless of whom the offender may be, in accordance with the method set out below.

**What to do If You have a Grievance**

Step	What to do	When
Step 1	If you can, try to sort it out yourself with the person or people involved. You may find that they didn't mean to do what they did.	Do this as soon as possible
Step 2	If you aren't sure how to handle the problem yourself or you just want to talk confidentially about the problem with someone and get some more information about what you can do, talk to line manager.	Do this as soon as possible  The line managers must speak with you as soon as possible i.e. preferably on the same day you ask to see them.
Step 3	To get the grievance sorted out, go to see: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Your supervisor, or if you don't want to see them,</li> <li>• Your manager, or if you don't want to see them,</li> <li>• Any other supervisor or manager who is at a higher level than you, or Manager Human Resources.</li> </ul>	Do this as soon as possible  The person you see must get full information from you as soon as possible. You must complete the Grievance Notification Form within two working days. Supervisor must sort out the grievance as quickly as possible. If resolution is successful; Grievance Resolution Form is complete by both Supervisor and employee.
Step 4	If you are unhappy with the way the grievance is being, or has been, sorted out, you can firstly appeal to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The manager of the person who was/is sorting out your complaint, or if you don't want to see them</li> <li>• Any other more senior manager, Supervisor organizes meeting between Manager and Employee.</li> </ul>	Do this as soon as possible  Manager must sort out the grievance as quickly as possible. If resolution is successful; Grievance Resolution Form is completed by both
Step 5	If you are unhappy with the way the grievance is being, or has been, sorted out, you can secondly appeal to: CEO <i>COO organizes meeting between CEO and Employee.</i>	Do this as soon as possible  Chairman of Board must sort out the grievance as fast as possible. If resolution is successful; Grievance Resolution Form is completed by both.

## Our Internal Grievance Procedures

An employee who has a grievance over any work-related issue has the right to raise their concerns with USS management.

### Informal Dealing

Issues of a serious nature should always be dealt with formally; however, when mutually agreed, less serious grievances should be dealt with informally. This should take the form of an informal discussion between the aggrieved party and an appropriate manager. If it becomes clear that the matter cannot be resolved satisfactorily, or that the case is more serious than first assessed, the formal process must be adopted. If both parties agree that the grievance has been resolved satisfactorily no further action need be taken but the manager should make an informal note to record the event, its nature and outcome.

### Formal Process

The formal process may involve up to four procedures:-

- **Grievance Submission.** The aggrieved party must provide an appropriate USS manager (i.e.: direct Manager, or HR Manager) with a written submission, which gives details of the grievance; these should include:
  - The nature of the grievance.
  - Where the incident(s) has occurred.
  - Who has been involved?
  - When the incident(s) happened or has been happening.
  - Any actions that have been taken so far by any of the parties concerned.
- **Grievance Hearing.** USS's management will arrange for a meeting to take place as quickly as possible to discuss the grievance. In preparing for such a meeting managers should consider the following:
  - Having an impartial record keeper, making themselves aware of the full facts of the case, how similar grievances may have been resolved in the past, whether an interpreter may be needed.
  - The aggrieved party has the right to be accompanied by a colleague, who may be allowed to address the meeting on the employee's behalf, sum up the employee's case, respond to any views expressed at the meeting and confer with the employee.
  - Once the hearing has finished the USS manager will take time to consider the case.
- **Management Decision Process.** In making the decision upon the outcome and USS's position the manager should consult the HR, Legal and Contracts or other Senior Managers within the company – and is encouraged to do so. Regardless the decision should be presented in writing

within 24 hours of the hearing. Once it has been made the manager is to inform the aggrieved party in writing of the outcome. The latter has the right to appeal if they are dissatisfied.

- **Grievance Appeal.** If the aggrieved party is dissatisfied with the outcome of the decision, they can appeal but this must be submitted within five working days explaining their grounds for appealing in writing to USS management. An appeal meeting should be arranged within five working days and will be run by the next more senior manager until appeal reaches to CEO.

*Employee has a right to go to the court if the grievance outcome is not acceptable to him or her. USS encourages complaints/ suggestions at all levels as this forms part of our integral procedure of check / balance and also for our monitoring and evaluation department to overcome any such issues in future.*

### **Time for Reporting a Complaint**

Prompt reporting of complaints is strongly encouraged as it allows for rapid response and resolution of objectionable behavior or conditions for the reporting individual and any other employees. Failure to report an incident may result in the offender not being aware his or her conduct is offensive and thereby repeating the activity.

### **Sanctions for Mistreatment**

Individuals found to have engaged in misconduct constituting mistreatment shall be subject to appropriate disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment. Appropriate sanctions will be determined by the CEO of USS. In addressing incidents of harassment, USS's response at a minimum will include reprimanding the offender and preparing a written record of the investigation and outcome.

### **False Accusations**

If an investigation results in a finding that the reporting individual falsely and maliciously accused another of harassment, the reporting individual shall be subject to appropriate disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment.

### **Maintaining a Written Record of the Complaint**

USS shall maintain a complete written record of each complaint and how it was investigated and resolved. Written records shall be maintained in a confidential manner to the extent practical and appropriate and shall be maintained in the possession of the HR/Chief Operating Officer of USS.

### **Our External Grievance Process**

USS fully endorse and support the idea of external parties in the overall Grievance Procedure of his employees. The procedure of reporting any grievance by third party is almost same as own employees. Where, grievance is reported verbally or by in written by the affected party. The same is accounted for on merit immediately by concerned Manager/HR.

- **Informal Approach.** USS prefers to resolve grievance issues on an informal basis, whenever possible; but only when this course is mutually agreeable.

- **Formal Approach.** The formal approach requires the aggrieved party to submit the details of their complaint in writing to the USS HR or COO at email [sajid.manzoor@ussgroup.pk](mailto:sajid.manzoor@ussgroup.pk)
  - Command and Control Center (CCC) contact number 051-2305011, available 24/7 can also be approached for recording any grievance by external party.
- Arrangements will be made for a hearing – the composition of attendees will be agreed on a case-by-case basis.
- The grievance raised is shared with all stakeholders for their information and input for settling the grievance. This also ensures transparency in addressing the raised grievance.
- USS will inform the aggrieved party of its decision in writing within 24 hours of the hearing being completed. The aggrieved party has the right to appeal within five working days and this process should be started by a submission in writing explaining the grounds for this appeal.
- A further hearing will be convened but managed by a different person with the findings being promulgated within 24 hours of its completion.
- In the whole process, the identity of third party is kept confidential and is not shared with unauthorized party.

### Summary

Grievances are to be handled with sensitivity and respect, but without undue delay. The procedures are relatively straightforward; the importance of keeping records is emphasized. Advice should be sought from senior managers (particularly the HR and the Legal and Contracts) from the outset. The over-arching intent is for the fair treatment of all persons within and external to USS.

### Mediation

As an alternative for those wishing to resolve disputes between themselves without resorting to the formal complaint procedures, USS will, if all parties agree, make available a trained outside mediator to help those parties find an amicable, informal solution. If mediation does not solve the problem, the affected parties may still use the procedures in this policy.

### Conclusion

USS has developed this policy in an effort to ensure that all of its employees and associate personnel can work in an environment free from mistreatment. USS is committed to eliminating any mistreatment in the workplace.