

GRIEVANCE POLICY

Version: April 2022

1. PURPOSE OF POLICY

- 1.1 The grievance procedure is a framework for resolving grievances which you have concerning any aspect of your employment with the Diocese. All individual grievances, including those relating to pay, will be dealt with in accordance with this procedure.
- 1.2 The primary aim of the procedure is to arrive at a mutually satisfactory solution of the grievance as quickly as possible in a way which is as pastorally sensitive as possible. In this context, you are encouraged to deal, or help us to deal, with problems informally in the first instance.
- 1.3 Where possible, you should first discuss, on an informal basis, your grievance with your immediate line manager who is usually in the best position to help. However, there may be circumstances where you feel unable to approach the line manager and in these instances the procedures set out below should be followed.

2. PROCEDURE

- 2.1 If you have felt unable to approach your line manager (see paragraph 1.3 above), a friendly intervention of someone else may prove to be the least upsetting way of resolving any difficulty. If you feel this could assist you should ask the Chief Operating Officer for assistance. If you have initially decided to lodge your complaint or grievance in accordance with paragraph 2.2 below, the Chief Operating Officer may suggest that, with your consent, you may like to consider an informal intervention by someone, as described above.
- 2.2 This paragraph '2.1 procedure' may be particularly helpful when a significant element of the complaint or grievance is the introduction or operation of a management policy or decision.

- 2.3 When informal attempts to resolve the problem have failed or you wish to invoke the formal procedure then you should lodge the complaint or grievance by setting out clearly the exact nature of the complaint or problem. This must be presented to your line manager, or, if you prefer, the Chief Operating Officer.
- 2.4 Stage 1 – Formal discussions with line manager –
- The Diocese will then investigate the grievance in so far as it has not already been involved in the process described in paragraphs in 1.3 and 2.1 and seek to arrange a hearing as soon as possible (usually within 14 calendar days).
 - If, for any reason, the hearing is likely to take longer to arrange, this will be communicated to you.
- 2.5 You have the right to be accompanied by a work colleague or Trade Union representative in presenting your grievance at any hearing if you wish. You will be advised in writing of the outcome of your grievance and of your right of appeal, normally within 14 days.
- 2.6 Stage 2 – Discussions with senior management
- If you are not satisfied with the outcome of the hearing, you may raise the matter with a more senior manager (possibly a Diocesan Trustee).
 - The appropriate level of manager will depend on the issues and circumstances and size of the parish or department but will normally be a senior manager or HR representative. You should seek clarification from the Chief Operating Officer as to whom the matter should be referred to and it must be made in writing within 7 calendar days of receiving the response to the Stage 1 hearing.
 - You will be able to state your case at a hearing (usually within 14 calendar days of the Diocese receiving your written request). At that hearing you have the right to be accompanied by a work colleague or represented by a Trade Union representative.
 - You will be notified of a decision concerning the grievance within 14 calendar days from the date of the hearing. If this is not possible you will be given an explanation for the delay within those 14 calendar days and told when a response can be expected.
- 2.7 The decision made at Stage 2 is final and binding.

- 2.8 Grievances raised after employment has ended: if you bring a grievance after your employment has ended, the Diocese may respond in writing without holding a hearing if you agree.

3. GENERAL POLICY GUIDELINES

- 3.1 An employee may seek advice and or counselling from the Chief Operating Officer before invoking the grievance procedure, and at any stage of the grievance procedure. If English is not your first language and you are finding it difficult to express your complaint in writing, we would encourage you to seek advice from a work colleague or the Chief Operating Officer.
- 3.2 If a grievance is raised during the course of a disciplinary procedure, the Diocese reserves the right to suspend the disciplinary procedure until the grievance can be considered. The Diocese may bring another Manager to deal with the disciplinary case if it feels it would be appropriate.
- 3.3 Records will be kept detailing the nature of any grievance raised, the manager's response, any action taken and the reason for it. These records will be kept confidential and retained in accordance with the GDPR legislation, which requires the release of certain data to individuals on their request. Copies of any meeting records may be given to you if requested, although in certain circumstances some information may be withheld, for example to protect a witness or where, as a result of this procedure any action or process has been taken or initiated involving another person.

4. CONTACTING THE CHIEF OPERATING OFFICER

- 4.1 The Diocese works with an external HR adviser for support on employment issues. HR support is provided through the Chief Operating Officer via coo@abdiocese.org.uk.

Approval

The policy was approved by the Diocesan Board of Trustees on 28 April 2022

The next review is due by: 30 April 2024