

## FOREST LAKES FIRE DISTRICT GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE POLICY NUMBER 0012



### Purpose

The Forest Lakes Fire Department makes every effort to create a safe and non-prejudicial atmosphere, free from any harassment or bias.

The Purpose of the Grievance Procedures is to provide a uniform, systematic, just and equitable method for the resolution of grievances as quickly as possible.

### Definitions

A grievance is a complaint by a member of the Forest Lakes Fire Department, and may address a variety of subjects including: the interpretation of procedures governing personnel practices, department work rules, unsafe or unhealthy working conditions, promotions, alleged improper treatment or alleged unjust termination.

Fire Department refers to the Forest Lakes Fire Department.

Employees include all paid and voluntary members working for the Forest Lakes Fire Department, except for the Fire Chief, who works under a separate contract with the Fire Board.

### Policy

#### PROCEDURE:

All members will be assured freedom from reprisal for using these grievance procedures, which should be resolved as follows:

A. **INFORMAL GRIEVANCE:** A member who has a problem or complaint should first try to get it settled through discussion with the immediate supervisor, as quickly as possible. The member may have another person of their choice accompany them to discuss the grievance if so desired. Every effort should be made to find an acceptable solution by informal means at the lowest possible level of supervision. Documentation at this level is at the discretion of the immediate supervisor, and may just include a note in the employee's file.

B. **FORMAL GRIEVANCE:** If a member's problem or complaint cannot be resolved through informal procedures, the member has the right to begin formal grievance procedures.



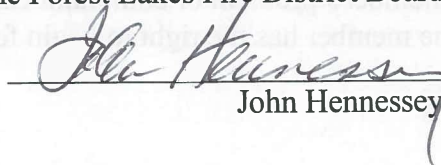
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1. First level of review: Immediate Supervisor. The initial step in the formal process requires the member present the problem or complaint in writing within ten (10) calendar days of the time the problem was addressed through the informal procedure. The Immediate Supervisor shall review the written complaint as well as any relevant discussions in the informal grievance procedure, to render a formal decision and provide comments on the grievance in writing to the member within five (5) calendar days of the receipt of the grievance. A copy of each will be sent to the Fire Chief.
2. Second level of review: Fire Chief. If the member is not satisfied with the decision rendered at the first level, they may send to the Fire Chief a statement or reason or reasons why they are not satisfied with the decision already rendered. This shall be done within five (5) calendar days of the receipt of the written decision from the first level.
3. At the Fire Chief's discretion, the Fire Chief may convene a Hearing Board composed of the Fire Chief and Department Officers to address the complaint. Otherwise, the Fire Chief will address the complaint in his/her human resources capacity for the Fire District. The Hearing Board/Fire Chief will schedule a meeting with the employee to discuss the grievance, and may include the person against whom the grievance is directed. Either of the named parties involved may bring another individual with them if so desired. This meeting shall be scheduled within five (5) calendar days from the time the written statement is delivered to the Fire Chief. The persons involved will be given a written notice prior to the time of the meeting indicating the time and location of the meeting. After this meeting is held, the Hearing Board/Fire Chief shall render a decision and provide a written copy to all parties within five (5) working days, including the member and the person against whom a grievance is directed.
4. If the complaint is against the Fire Chief the employee has the option to notify the Chairman of the Board. The Fire Board may use discretion in using the services of an outside professional to handle the investigation. In conducting the investigation, the Fire Board will adhere to the spirit and intent as outlined in section 3, above, to the extent possible. All communications regarding the complaint will be subject to Executive Privilege. Notifications to affected parties will be handled as expeditiously as possible.

***All members are assured freedom from reprisal for using the grievance procedure.***

Approved by the Forest Lakes Fire District Board: September 19, 2020.

  
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John Hennessey, Clerk