

Policy:

Grace & Favour Ministries places considerable importance on establishing good relationships with its volunteers ensuring that they are treated in a fair and consistent manner.

Grace & Favour Ministries hopes that any issues can be dealt with on an informal basis and with the people concerned. If a volunteer has a problem with any other volunteer, and is unable to sort it out informally, the matter should be referred to a trustee. You may be able to agree on an informal solution between you, but, where this is not possible, a formal approach may be appropriate. Every effort will be made to resolve any issue at the earliest possible stage, and usually within 30 days, to avoid further proceedings and to settle the issue amicably.

If the problem is serious or remains unresolved or the volunteer wishes to raise the matter formally, the volunteer can use the formal grievance procedure. In the case of a grievance being taken out as a counter-grievance, or in response to the start of disciplinary action, it may be appropriate to deal with both issues at the same time. If appropriate, the disciplinary procedure may be temporarily suspended in order to deal with the grievance.

Procedure

This procedure has been implemented following consultation with the Grace & Favour Team

a) Raise the grievance in writing

The volunteer should raise a grievance with a trustee without unreasonable delay, normally within 30 days of the incident (or final incident) which gives rise to the complaint. If the grievance is against the trustee, the matter should be raised with the Chair of Trustees. Whoever deals with the grievance at the meeting, will normally be excluded from hearing any appeal. The volunteer must detail in writing the specific circumstance or circumstances which constitute the grievance, with dates, times, witnesses, etc. as applicable. Volunteers should stick to the facts and avoid insulting or abusive language.

b) Invitation to a Grievance Meeting

The trustee will invite the volunteer to attend a meeting, without unavoidable delay to discuss the matter. The trustee will also state that the volunteer is entitled to be accompanied by a trade union representative or a fellow volunteer at the meeting.

c) Grievance Meeting

Where possible, a note-taker, who must be uninvolved in the case, will take down a record of the proceedings. The trustee (or Chair of Trustees) will introduce the meeting, read out the grounds of the volunteer's grievance, ask the volunteer if they are correct and require the volunteer to provide clarification regarding details of the grievance if unclear. The volunteer will be given the opportunity to put forward her/his case and say how they would like to see it resolved. The volunteer may call witnesses and refer to any documents previously provided to the trustee. The trustee (or Chair of Trustees) may question the volunteer and any of the volunteer's witnesses. The volunteer/companion will be given the opportunity to sum up but may not introduce any new material. The meeting may be adjourned by the trustee (or Chair of Trustees) if it is considered necessary to undertake further investigation. Any necessary investigations will be carried out to establish the facts

of the case. The meeting will be reconvened as soon as possible. Having considered the grievance, the trustee (or Chair of Trustees) will give her/his decision regarding the case in writing to the volunteer which will normally be within five working days. If appropriate, the decision will set out what action the organisation intends to take to resolve the grievance or if the grievance is not upheld, will explain the reasons. This will also include notifying the volunteer of her/his right of appeal and the procedure to be followed.

- d) **Appeal** If still unresolved the volunteer may refer the matter, in writing, to the Chair of the Board of Trustees, or if the Chair has already been involved in an earlier stage of the procedure, to the Vice-Chair of the Board of Trustees. The volunteer wishing to appeal against a grievance decision, must do so in writing within five working days of receiving written notification of the grievance decision, stating the reasons for the appeal. Any documents submitted in support of the appeal must be attached. Arrangements for the appeal meeting will be made by the Chair (or the ViceChair if appropriate) who will ensure that a note-taker is present if possible. The appeal meeting should be held without unavoidable delay. Where possible, at least two members of the trustees will constitute an Appeal Panel. The trustee or trustees hearing the appeal should, if at all possible, have had no direct involvement in the case. The volunteer is entitled to be accompanied by a trade union representative or fellow volunteer at the appeal. The meeting may be adjourned by the Appeal Panel or person hearing the appeal, if it is considered necessary to undertake further investigation. The meeting will be reconvened as soon as possible.

The decision of the Appeal Panel or the person hearing the appeal shall be final. The policy/procedure will be reviewed every 2 years or in response to changes to legislation or best practice, whichever is sooner.

Prepared in reference to the Acas Code of Practice for Disciplinary and Grievance Procedures,

<https://www.acas.org.uk/sites/default/files/2024-08/discipline-and-grievances-at-work-the-acas-guide.pdf>

Reviewed by Grace & Favour Team 09/09/2025

Adopted by Trustees: 31/03/25

Signed:

Nancy Clarke-Hall

Role: Founder/Marketing Officer

Date: 31/03/25