

RUTLAND FIRST CIC

**STAFF GRIEVANCE
POLICY**

1. Purpose and Scope

This policy aims to provide a clear, fair, and consistent process for addressing employee grievances. It ensures that any concerns related to employment, conduct, or practices within Rutland First CIC are addressed promptly and constructively and should be first dealt with as close to source as possible.

This policy applies to all employees of Rutland First CIC, regardless of role or length of service.

2. Principles

- Wherever possible, grievances should be resolved informally
- All parties must engage respectfully and professionally throughout the process.
- Confidentiality will be maintained as far as reasonably possible.
- Employees have the right to be accompanied at formal meetings by a colleague or trade union representative.
- No employee will face retaliation for raising a genuine grievance.
- Employees should recognise that an investigation may be necessary which may delay the process beyond normal limits.
- At any stage of the procedure, the case manager may refer to an adviser external to the Rutland First Board for guidance to bring about a resolution of the grievance acceptable to all parties outside the formal procedure. Such conciliation is without prejudice to the position of all parties in the procedure.

Where the grievance relates to a matter covered by another policy, for example pay or whistleblowing, then the matter will be dealt with in accordance with that procedure. This procedure is not intended for challenging dismissal or disciplinary action, which should be addressed through the Disciplinary Appeals Process. Management will have discretion to decide what is most appropriate in all circumstances

3. Accessibility

If an employee requires assistance due to a disability or language barrier, they should inform their line manager, who will take reasonable steps to support them through the process.

Stages of the Grievance Process

4. Informal Resolution

Employees are encouraged to raise concerns informally with their line manager or relevant colleague. Early discussion can lead to prompt and amicable solutions. If the grievance is against the line manager personally, the grievance may be referred directly to a formal grievance review but it would normally be reasonable to inform the line manager of this intention.

Where appropriate, mediation may be proposed to help resolve disputes in a constructive manner. Mediation is a voluntary and confidential process facilitated by a neutral third party.

5. Formal Grievance Procedure

Step 1: Submission of Grievance

If an employee is not satisfied their concerns have been addressed informally, the employee should submit the grievance in writing. The employee must submit a written complaint to indicate that they wish to raise a formal grievance and submit it to their line manager or, if inappropriate, to a Board Member or the Board Chair. The written grievance should detail:

- The nature of the complaint
- Key facts, dates, and individuals involved
- Any steps taken to resolve the issue informally

The line manager or Board Member will normally meet the employee to hear the grievance as soon as possible normally within 10 working days even if it's only an interim reply pending further investigation. The Board Member may be accompanied by a HR Adviser.

An employee may bring a companion to make representation or ask questions but the companion should not answer questions on the employee's behalf.

If an investigation is deemed necessary, the amount of investigation required will depend on the nature of the complaint and vary from investigation to investigation. It may involve interviewing and taking statements from the employee, any witnesses and/or reviewing relevant documents

Step 2: Investigation

Rutland First will assess whether a formal investigation is required. If so, it will be carried out promptly and fairly. Employees must cooperate fully and provide any relevant information or names of witnesses.

An investigation may be started before a grievance meeting is held where this is considered appropriate. In other cases, a grievance meeting may be held with the employee before deciding what investigation if any to carry out. A further meeting with the employee may be held after the investigation and before a decision is reached.

Step 3: Grievance Meeting

The employee will be invited to a meeting to discuss the grievance, normally within 5 working days. They may be accompanied by a representative. The Chair of the meeting will:

- Outline the purpose and process
- Allow the employee to present their case
- Consider evidence and ask questions
- Summarise findings before concluding

A written decision will follow, normally within 5 working days. If the employee raising the grievance is not satisfied with the outcome, then the employee may appeal

6. Appeals

First Appeal

If the employee is dissatisfied with the outcome, they may submit a written appeal to the Board Chair within 5 working days. The employee must detail how they consider the grievance has not been correctly applied and/or how the outcome was not reasonable or proportionate. The appeal will be heard as soon as possible after receipt of the letter by an Appeal Panel of two or more Board Members. The Appeal Board may have a HR adviser attend the meeting. A nominated Board Member will chair the appeal hearing and provide a written response within 5 working days.

Final Appeal

If still dissatisfied, the employee may request a final appeal in writing to the Board Chair. This meeting, chaired by the Chair or another nominated Board Member, represents the final stage of internal appeal. A written decision will follow, normally within 5 working days.

7. Collective Grievances

Where two or more employees raise an identical grievance, a collective grievance may be submitted. A group may appoint nominated representatives to act on their behalf throughout the process. The same procedural steps apply to collective grievances as to individual ones.

8. Mediation Guidelines

Mediation may be useful in cases involving:

- Peer conflict or communication issues
- Personality clashes
- Rebuilding relationships after a dispute

Mediation is *not appropriate* for:

- Allegations requiring investigation (e.g., discrimination, criminal conduct)
 - Issues requiring formal outcomes or disciplinary decisions
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9. Records and Confidentiality

All grievance records will be maintained confidentially in the employee's personnel file, including written complaints, investigation notes, and outcomes.

10. Status Quo During Grievance Process

The existing working arrangements (status quo) will generally remain in place while the grievance is being addressed unless a temporary change is deemed necessary.

11. Grievances from Former Employees

Rutland First may, at its discretion, consider grievances raised by former employees and respond where appropriate.

13. Policy Review

This policy is reviewed every two years or sooner if required by changes in legislation or operational needs.