

MODULE 6 | MANAGING STAFF, SERVICE RULES AND DISCIPLINARY CASES

Complaints and Starting Disciplinary Proceedings

Practical hospital governance in Punjab, Pakistan

Protect patients, establish the facts and begin the correct legal process.

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LECTURE

Start with facts, authority and a fair process

A complaint starts a question. It does not by itself establish guilt.

- Protect patients and preserve evidence while facts are checked.
- Identify the law, the authority and the correct disciplinary route.
- Prepare clear charges, a complete file and a record of service.

Study output

A complete case-initiation brief that another officer can understand and check.

Module 6 | Presentation 4 of 6. Allow 45-60 minutes with exercises. All explanations are on the pages; check the cited sources before live use.

OFFICIAL SOURCE

A principle tied to a named law, rule or official manual.

WORKING METHOD

A practical control or teaching format to adapt to the authorised system.

TEACHING CASE

An invented hospital example, used to practise applying the correct process.

A missing entry and a serious allegation

Invented example: a medicine issue register has a gap. A complaint alleges theft.

1

What is known?

A page contains no entry for one shift. The medicine count and issue records need checking.

2

What is unknown?

Who had custody? Was stock issued? Was there an emergency supply or a recording error?

3

What comes first?

Secure supplies, preserve the records and identify the authority that can decide the case.

Do not turn an unexplained record gap into a finding of theft before the evidence is examined.

Record the complaint without changing its meaning

Use a restricted complaint register and preserve the original submission.

01 Identity

Record the source, contact details if available and the date received.

02 Allegation

Record what allegedly happened, where and when. Separate facts from opinion.

03 Risk

Identify immediate danger to patients, staff, records, money or supplies.

04 Evidence

List records, messages and people with direct knowledge.

05 Ownership

Name the officer responsible for initial handling and the next review date.

06 Response

Acknowledge receipt through the approved channel without promising an outcome.

An anonymous complaint can identify a risk. Check the facts; do not treat anonymity as proof of guilt.

Protect patients while the allegation is checked

Take a necessary safety step within lawful management powers and record its reason.

Practical safety measures

- Arrange safe cover for an uncovered clinical duty.
- Secure a disputed stock batch or preserve relevant records.
- Seek the authorised officer's decision if a duty change or formal suspension is required.

Keep the process fair

- Describe an allegation as an allegation. Avoid public accusations.
- Limit access to those handling the case or providing authorised advice.
- Do not impose a pay deduction, fine or other penalty through an informal safety order.

A safety action must have its own authority, purpose and review date. It is not a finding of guilt.

Preserve the evidence before it disappears

Use an evidence log so the source and handling of each item remain clear.

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| 1 | Secure originals | Identify the record custodian. Preserve the original record and work from controlled copies. |
| 2 | Capture systems | Ask the authorised IT officer to retain relevant logs, dates, user IDs and existing backups. |
| 3 | Record custody | Log who collected the item, when, from where and every later handover. Preserve context. |
| 4 | Keep both sides | Retain material that supports the allegation and material that may explain or contradict it. |

Do not overwrite a record, reconstruct a false original or ask staff to agree on one account.

WORKING METHOD | Illustrative material is identified in the text.

Initial fact-finding is not the statutory inquiry

PEEDA means the Punjab Employees Efficiency, Discipline and Accountability Act 2006. Name each stage correctly.

Process	Purpose	Limit
Initial fact-finding	Clarify the event, records, people and immediate risks.	It does not replace the formal process required to impose a penalty.
PEEDA initiation	The competent authority decides whether sufficient grounds exist and selects the legal route.	An MS forwards a case if the required power is held elsewhere.
Statutory inquiry	An officer or committee appointed under the Act examines the specified charges.	Its powers and safeguards come from PEEDA, not an informal committee label.

Record preliminary findings as provisional. Keep the formal decision open until the required process is complete.

Sources: **D1**: ss.5, 9-11

Check who employs the person

PEEDA has its own definition of employee. It is wider than the label civil servant.

Within the statutory framework

- Section 1 covers employees in government service and corporation service.
- Section 2(h) includes specified Government-created, owned, managed or controlled bodies and institutions.
- A contract label alone does not answer the question. Check the employer, appointment terms and governing law.

Check exceptions and special cases

- Section 2(h) excludes High Court and subordinate-court judges and the employees of those courts.
- An outsourced worker is not automatically a hospital employee for PEEDA purposes.
- Deputation, retirement and an institution's special law require a specific scope check.

Identify the person's legal employment status before selecting the statute, authority or form.

Sources: **D1**: ss.1, 2(h), 20-21

The MS title does not establish disciplinary power

Place the current appointment and authority documents at the start of the case file.

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| 1 | Identify the post | Confirm the employee's substantive post, rank, employer and service category. |
| 2 | Find the authority | Check the current Chief Minister-authorized competent-authority notification for that category. |
| 3 | Check the rank | Under section 2(f)(ii), that authority must not be below the appointing authority prescribed for the post. |
| 4 | Check signature | Section 5(2) requires the competent authority's signature. For the Chief Minister, an authorized officer may sign. |

Being the reporting officer, DDO, head of office or complaint recipient does not by itself confer PEEDA authority.

Sources: **D1**: ss.2(c), 2(f), 5(2) | **D3**: applicable authority notification

Joint cases and a personal interest need care

Do not combine employees simply because they work in the same department.

A properly framed joint case

- For joint proceedings, section 2(f) makes the authority for the senior-most employee the authority for all accused.
- Identify each employee's alleged act or omission and relevant duty.
- Keep separate evidence and findings for separate charges and persons.

A personal interest in the outcome

- Record and refer a potential conflict before the authority decides the case.
- Section 2(f) provides a route where an authority other than the Chief Minister has an interest and does not wish to act for personal reasons.
- The next higher authority authorises another officer of corresponding rank and status for that case.

Rank, joint-case authority and the conflict route must be checked before the initiation order is signed.

Sources: **D1**: s.2(f) provisos; ss.7(a), 9(1)(b)

Link the allegation to a ground under PEEDA

Section 3 states the grounds. Section 2 defines important terms.

Ground	Plain-language meaning for case preparation
Inefficiency	Failure to perform assigned duties efficiently; the definition also covers failure in three consecutive departmental-examination attempts.
Misconduct	The statutory definition includes service-discipline breaches, conduct-rule breaches and absence without prior approved leave.
Corruption	The definition includes unlawful gratification, dishonest misuse of public property and other specified corrupt conduct.
Other section 3 grounds	Subversive activity with the statutory national-security condition, or unauthorised disclosure of official secrets.

These are summaries, not replacement definitions. Identify the exact statutory limb and supporting facts.

Sources: **D1**: ss.2(g), 2(k), 2(n), 3

A poor clinical outcome is not a complete charge

An adverse event may involve an individual act, a system failure, both or neither.

Ask about the individual duty

- What task was assigned, to whom, and at what time?
- What standard, instruction or rule allegedly applied?
- What act or omission does the evidence actually show?

Ask about the working conditions

- Were trained staff, equipment, medicines and required information available?
- Was the roster clear? Was an approved substitute or escalation plan used?
- Does a clinical opinion need independent expert review before an allegation is framed?

Check the event and the alleged breach separately. Do not assume that patient harm proves employee misconduct.

A clear charge answers six questions

A charge describes an alleged act or omission. A finding is reached after the lawful process.

01 Who?

Name the employee, post and relevant duty or responsibility.

02 When?

Give a specific date, period and shift or time where material.

03 Where?

Identify the ward, office, store or other relevant location.

04 What?

Describe the alleged act or omission in clear, neutral words.

05 Which duty?

Identify the rule, order, assigned task or statutory ground relied upon.

06 Which evidence?

Identify the records and witnesses that can support or contradict the allegation.

Do not use insulting labels, unrelated complaints or an unparticularised allegation of poor performance.

Sources: **D1**: ss.2(d), 7(a), 9(1)(b)

Replace a vague accusation with a precise allegation

Invented example only. This is a drafting illustration, not a signed statutory notice.

Vague wording	You are careless, habitually absent and responsible for all problems in the unit.
Better wording	It is alleged that you did not attend the assigned Store B duty from 08:00 to 14:00 on 12 September 2026, without prior approval of leave.
Duty and basis	Roster R-16 assigns that duty. The allegation is considered under section 2(n)(vii), read with section 3(ii), subject to the evidence and your response.
Evidence to test	Roster acknowledgement; leave record; attendance logs; supervisor's account; duty-swap records and the employee's explanation.
Do not overstate	A missing biometric mark alone may not establish absence from duty. Check the complete record before deciding the charge.

Give each distinct allegation its own charge number. Follow the full notice requirements for the chosen legal route.

Sources: **D1**: ss.2(n)(vii), 3(ii), 7(a)

One incident can involve different alleged failures

Invented stock case: a missing issue entry does not establish a common offence by everyone.

Employee role	Question to investigate	Relevant evidence
Store custodian	Was an authorised issue recorded and stock handed over correctly?	Stock book, issue slips, custody and handover record.
Receiving officer	Were the stated items actually received and acknowledged?	Ward receipt, quantity check and recipient's account.
Supervisor	Was a specific required check assigned and omitted?	Written duty, check schedule and signed review record.
Approving officer	Was approval within authority and based on truthful information?	Request, sanction, delegated power and information supplied.

Do not divide blame equally by designation. State each alleged act, evidence and responsibility.

Sources: **D1**: ss.7(a), 9(1)(b)

The authority must select the correct route

The threshold for initiation is sufficient grounds in the competent authority's opinion.

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| 1 | Review the material | Use the authority's own knowledge or the information placed before it. Check scope and authority first. |
| 2 | Route without inquiry | Issue a section 7 show-cause notice and record the reasons for dispensing with inquiry, subject to section 5 exceptions. |
| 3 | Route with inquiry | Where inquiry is required, appoint an inquiry officer or committee and make the written order required by section 9. |
| 4 | Keep the decision | Retain the evidence considered, the grounds, the selected provision and the signed order. |

Do not start with a preferred punishment and then choose a process merely to achieve it.

Sources: **D1**: ss.5, 7, 9

When the Act requires or permits dispensing with inquiry

Dispensing with inquiry does not ordinarily remove the show-cause and hearing stages.

Inquiry must be dispensed with

- Section 5(1)(b) covers conviction for an offence other than corruption by a court of law.
- It also covers absence from duty without prior approval of leave.
- Check the actual conviction or absence record. Follow section 7 and the applicable section 8 route.

Inquiry may be dispensed with

- The authority has sufficient documentary evidence against the employee.
- Or it is satisfied that no inquiry is needed, for reasons recorded in writing.
- The decision must fit section 5. A general desire to finish quickly is not a substitute for the legal basis.

For absence, check dates, roster, approved leave and explanations before reaching the final finding.

Sources: **D1**: s.5(1)(b) provisos; ss.7-8

Omitting a hearing is a separate, exceptional decision

Section 5(1)(a) lists the exceptional grounds. Do not extend them by analogy.

Statutory situation	Required discipline in handling
Security of Pakistan	The authority must be satisfied that giving the opportunity is not expedient in that security interest.
Plea bargain or corruption conviction	Check the exact plea bargain or conviction and the statutory conditions. Read section 8 as well.
Subversive activities	Use the actual statutory ground and evidence. Ordinary workplace disagreement is not this category.
Not reasonably practicable	The inability to give the opportunity needs a defensible factual basis. Mere inconvenience is insufficient.

Obtain case-specific legal advice before relying on an exception that removes an opportunity to respond.

Sources: **D1**: s.5(1)(a) proviso; s.8

What a notice without inquiry must contain

Section 7 applies where inquiry is dispensed with, subject to the section 5 exceptions.

01 Authority

Identify the competent authority and the applicable legal provisions.

02 Grounds

State clear charges and each employee's apportioned responsibility.

03 Proposed action

Specify the proposed penalty or penalties; a final decision is still open.

04 Reply period

Allow seven days from receipt, or the extended period the authority determines.

05 Record access

Arrange access to relevant relied-on material through an authorised channel.

06 Signature

Ensure the notice is signed as required by section 5(2). Keep the issued version.

A routine request for an explanation does not automatically satisfy every requirement of a section 7 notice.

Sources: **D1**: ss.5(2), 7(a)-(b)

Prove receipt and preserve the response record

The statutory reply period is tied to receipt. Record how the notice was delivered.

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| 1 | Use the right route | Follow the applicable service procedure and verified address. Keep dispatch and delivery evidence. |
| 2 | Record receipt | Keep acknowledgement or other valid proof of service. Enter the legally calculated reply deadline. |
| 3 | Handle difficulty | If delivery fails or is refused, retain the evidence and seek the authority's direction on valid further service. |
| 4 | Record extensions | Put any permitted extension and its new deadline in writing. File the reply with its actual receipt date. |

Do not assume a sent message proves lawful service. A non-reply is not, by itself, proof that the charge is true.

Sources: **D1**: ss.7(b)-(c), 9(1)(d)

Read the reply before deciding the case

No inquiry does not mean no assessment of the evidence.

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| 1 | Test the response | Compare each reply with the charge, relied-on documents and any supporting explanation. |
| 2 | Decide proof | After the reply or expiry of its period, the authority determines whether the charges are proved. |
| 3 | Give the hearing | Before a penalty, give the required personal hearing. A hearing officer is permitted only for Secretary-level authority or above. |
| 4 | Issue the order | Exonerate in writing if charges are not proved. If proved, decide and record the lawful penalty under section 7. |

The exceptional section 5(1)(a) cases require separate handling. Do not treat them as the ordinary procedure.

Sources: **D1**: s.7(c)-(f); s.5(1)(a)

Track section 7 dates and the actual legal consequences

Apply the deadline to the correct event. A missed administrative target is not automatic exoneration.

Decision period under section 7(c)

- After receipt of the reply, the authority normally has 90 days to decide.
- The provision excludes the Chief Minister as authority and time when the competent-authority post remained vacant.
- If overdue, the employee may apply to the appellate authority for a direction for early decision.

Proved charges still need the right order

- Section 7(f) requires dismissal for proved grave corruption, with recovery if applicable.
- For proved absence exceeding one year, it requires compulsory retirement, removal or dismissal.
- Other penalty choices must fit section 4 and the facts. Lecture 28 explains final orders and remedies.

Maintain a dated case register. Verify legal time calculation and any special order before acting.

Sources: **D1**: s.7(c), (f); s.4

If inquiry is needed, issue a complete written order

The inquiry must begin with clear authority, charges and responsibility.

01 Appointment

Name an officer or committee. The officer or convener must be senior in rank.

02 Joint cases

The officer or convener must be senior to the senior-most accused.

03 Charges

State the grounds and clear charges, with responsibility apportioned.

04 Representative

Appoint the departmental representative by designation.

05 Defence

Direct a written defence within seven days of receipt, or the authority's extended period.

06 Case material

Send the case record and list of witnesses, if any, with the inquiry order.

Lecture 27 covers evidence, cross-examination, the inquiry report and fairness during the inquiry.

Sources: **D1**: ss.5(2), 9

Suspension requires a lawful, time-limited order

The competent authority may suspend where it considers suspension necessary or expedient.

What section 6 states

- It concerns an employee against whom section 5 action is proposed.
- The initial suspension period is 90 days.
- Each continuation requires prior approval of the competent authority.

The expiry rule matters

- If not extended for a further 90 days within 30 days of expiry of the initial period, the employee is deemed reinstated.
- Do not describe suspension as automatically lasting until the inquiry ends.
- Maintain exact dates and obtain the authority's decision in time; do not invent retrospective approval.

Suspension is distinct from a penalty under section 4. It does not itself prove misconduct.

Sources: **D1**: ss.4-6

Keep safety, service status and pay records aligned

Use this working checklist with the actual suspension order and applicable service rules.

01 Reasons

Keep the authority's recorded basis and the order in the case file.

02 Dates

Track start, period, review and extension decisions with an early warning.

03 Cover

Name the lawful replacement for the affected duty and record the handover.

04 Access

Preserve records and set only authorised, necessary access arrangements.

05 Pay status

Refer pay and allowance treatment to the applicable rules and competent orders.

06 Return

Implement reinstatement or later orders promptly and record the employee's status.

An informal direction to take leave is not a substitute for the lawful suspension or leave process.

One event may require more than one legal response

Identify the purpose and authority of each route. Do not assume that one automatically replaces the other.

Separate responsibilities

- A patient-safety review asks how to prevent further harm.
- A professional regulator considers matters within its own statutory jurisdiction.
- Workplace harassment or a suspected criminal offence may require a separate prescribed complaint or referral route.

PEEDA remains a distinct process

- Section 4(3) says a PEEDA penalty does not absolve liability for a punishable offence.
- Section 8 gives specific routes for conviction, plea bargain and specified acquittals by compounding.
- Coordinate through authorised legal advice. Record any court order that affects the case.

A First Information Report (FIR) is not a conviction. Do not apply section 8 solely because a complaint was registered.

Sources: **D1**: ss.4(3), 8

Check the dates before assuming PEEDA can be used

A current case and a saved older proceeding may follow different statutory provisions.

Retired employees

- Section 1(4)(iii) covers proceedings initiated during service or within one year of retirement.
- Section 21 sets a two-year completion period from retirement. The 2026 amendment permits a specific extension by the competent authority with written reasons.
- Check initiation, retirement, decisions and any valid extension. Obtain advice on disputed timing or transitional issues.

Older disciplinary proceedings

- Section 20 gives PEEDA overriding effect where applicable.
- Section 26 repeals the 2000 Removal from Service Ordinance and saves specified proceedings pending at commencement.
- Do not combine PEEDA notices with old E&D procedures merely because an old office template is available.

Select one legally correct procedure and document why it applies. Do not guess from the age of the incident alone.

Sources: **D1**: ss.1(4)(iii), 20-21, 26 | **D2**: amended s.21

Six sections make the case reviewable

This is a working file structure, not a substitute for the statutory order.

01 Status

Appointment terms, post, employer, service category and governing provisions.

02 Authority

Current competent-authority notification and the applicable rank checks.

03 Facts

Original complaint, chronology, safety action and preliminary findings.

04 Evidence

Indexed records, sources, witnesses and contrary or explanatory material.

05 Proposed route

Exact charges, individual responsibility and reasoned section 5 proposal.

06 Issued papers

Signed order or notice, proof of service, reply dates and next action.

The reviewer should be able to trace every proposed charge to a duty, an alleged act and evidence.

Track the case without exposing its contents

Keep confidential case details in the controlled file; use a limited-access progress register.

Field	What to record
Case and owner	Case number, employee identifier, responsible officer and record location.
Authority and route	Applicable statute, competent authority and inquiry or no-inquiry route.
Current step	Notice issued, reply awaited, inquiry ordered or another exact status.
Dates and next action	Receipt, service, reply, hearing and suspension dates where relevant; named action owner.
Decision record	Order number, communication date, referral or closure basis and linked evidence.

A complaint-register closure is not the same as statutory exoneration, a penalty order or disposal of an appeal.

WORKING METHOD | Illustrative material is identified in the text.

Three initiation decisions

Write your answer and the reason before turning to the next page.

1. The power gap

The MS receives a serious complaint against a doctor. The file contains no notification giving the MS PEEDA power for that post.

What can the MS do now?

2. The missing mark

One biometric mark is missing. The doctor says an approved duty swap placed them in another unit.

What must be checked before deciding the allegation?

3. The shortcut

The authority dispenses with inquiry because it has records. Staff propose an immediate fine before serving a notice.

Is the ordinary section 7 process complete?

Use only the facts stated. All three situations are invented.

Answers and reasons

Use the evidence, the law and the actual source of authority.

1. Protect, preserve and refer

Take authorised safety and record-preservation steps. Identify the competent authority and send an evidence-based brief. Do not sign a statutory initiation order without the required power.

2. Test the actual duty record

Check the roster, approval of the swap, other attendance evidence, unit records and the explanation. A missing biometric mark is a fact to investigate, not a complete finding of unauthorised absence.

3. Complete the legal process

Ordinarily no. Section 7 requires a notice stating the charges, responsibility and proposed penalty, an opportunity to reply, a decision on proof and the required hearing before penalty. Exceptional section 5 grounds must actually apply.

A sound initiation file establishes jurisdiction and a fair question for determination; it does not predetermine the result.

Sources: **D1**: ss.2(f), 5, 7

Prepare one case-initiation brief

Use a non-confidential real case or the invented examples in this lecture.

1. Authority sheet

Identify the employee's legal status, applicable law and exact competent-authority document.

2. Charge sheet

Draft one clear allegation with dates, assigned duty, individual responsibility and evidence.

3. Route and dates

Explain the proposed procedure, required papers, service method and first tracked deadlines.

Review test: Can a neutral reader identify what is alleged, who has the power to act and how the employee can respond?

Use anonymised material. Do not place patient information or identifiable staff allegations in public teaching work.

A disciplined start protects the whole case

Use the same sequence even when there is pressure for an immediate answer.

1	Protect and preserve	Address immediate risk within authority. Secure the original complaint and evidence.
2	Check jurisdiction	Confirm employment status, law, competent authority, rank and any relevant dates.
3	Define and decide	Frame individual charges. The competent authority selects the proper section 5 route.
4	Serve and track	Issue the correct signed papers, document receipt and track replies, hearings and suspension status.

Next: Lecture 27 - Conducting a Fair Disciplinary Inquiry.

WORKING METHOD | Illustrative material is identified in the text.

Sources and continued use

Select a source title or its official-source link to open the document.

D1 Punjab Employees Efficiency, Discipline and Accountability Act 2006

Act XII of 2006. Sections 1-9, 20, 21 and 26 underpin this lecture. Read the Act with amendments and the current competent-authority notification for the employee.

Government of Punjab | Official legislation | [Official source](#) | [Official departmental copy](#)

D2 PEEDA (Amendment) Act 2026

Act XVII of 2026; Gazette dated 25 February 2026. Section 21(1) permits the competent authority to extend the retired-case completion period for a specific duration, with written reasons.

Government of Punjab | Punjab Laws | [Official source](#)

D3 S&GAD: official notifications and disciplinary guidance

Regulations/O&M Wing index of amendments, competent-authority changes and disciplinary guidance. Obtain the applicable current notification; the MS title alone does not confer every PEEDA power.

Government of Punjab | Services and General Administration Department | [Official source](#)

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