

903 GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE. Employees should make every reasonable effort to resolve work-related problems or complaints through normal channels before implementing the grievance procedure. This procedure consists of a maximum of three steps. Once initiated, the process will continue until the employee is either satisfied, fails to file a timely appeal or the right of appeal has been exhausted. Decisions shall become final when the employee fails to appeal in a timely manner or when their right of appeal has been exhausted. Employees who feel they have an appropriate grievance should proceed as follows:

- (a) **STEP 1** The employee shall notify the immediate supervisor in writing within five working days using a form provided by the personnel office for this purpose. If the grievance involves the supervisor, it is permissible to proceed directly to step two of this procedure. The supervisor shall investigate the grievance and respond in writing within five working days. The supervisor's response shall include a summary of the grievance along with the supervisor's findings and proposed resolution.
- (b) **STEP 2** If the supervisor's response is not satisfactory to the employee or the grievance directly involves the employee's immediate supervisor, the employee may appeal to the department head in writing within five working days using a form provided by the personnel office for this purpose. The department head shall investigate the complaint and issue a written response to all parties involved within five working days.
- (c) **STEP 3** If the department head's response is not satisfactory to the employee, the employee may appeal to the Personnel Advisory Council. This appeal must be submitted through the Board of County Commissioners within five working days using a form provided by the personnel office for this purpose. The Board shall transmit the grievance to the Personnel Advisory Council who shall set the matter for hearing within thirty days. All parties involved may appear and testify with the aid of an attorney or other representative if they so desire and at their own expense. The Council shall have the power to subpoena on behalf of itself and the parties involved. The Personnel Council shall review the matter and issue a written summary of their findings and recommendations within twenty days of the conclusion of the hearing to all parties involved. The elected official having jurisdiction over the affected department shall review the recommendations of the Council and issue a final decision within five working days. If the elected official fails to issue a decision within the specified time, the recommendations of the Council shall become final and shall be binding on all parties.

904 EMPLOYEE REPRESENTATION. Employees may be represented at their own expense by an agent of their choice at any step of the grievance process. Time spent by employees during their normal working hours in discussions with managers, supervisors or other agents of the county in connection with a grievance will be considered hours worked for pay purposes. Meetings between the employee and their representative shall not generally be considered hours worked.

905 EFFECTIVENESS OF DECISIONS. Decisions resulting from this grievance procedure shall not establish a precedent in any pending or future grievances unless they are officially adopted as county policy. When appropriate, decisions may be made retroactive.

906 CONFIDENTIALITY. Information concerning employee grievances is to be held in strict confidence. Supervisors, department heads and other members of management who are responsible for investigating a grievance are to discuss it only with those individuals who have a need to know or who may have necessary information.

907 PERSONNEL OFFICER. Supervisors and Department Heads shall keep the Personnel Officer informed of all grievances in progress. The Personnel Officer shall monitor the grievance process and assist managers, supervisors and employees in resolving employee's work-related complaints and grievances in a timely manner in accordance with the provisions of this policy. The Personnel Officer shall also maintain a record of all grievance proceedings.