

## Grievance Procedure

It is the policy of Bonneville County to provide employees and opportunity to present work-related concerns or complaints and appeal management decisions through a grievance procedure. The County shall attempt to resolve all grievances which are appropriate for handling under this policy in a timely manner. Employees shall not be subject to penalties or reprisals for proper use of the grievance procedure. However, it is not considered proper to raise grievances in bad faith or solely for the purpose of delay or harassment, or to repeatedly raise grievances that a reasonable person would judge to have no merit.

An appropriate grievance shall be defined as an employee's expressed dissatisfaction with working conditions or interpretation and application of work rules, policies or procedures.

Examples of matters which may be appropriate subjects for the complaint resolution policy include:

\*Unfair interpretation or application of county or department work rules, policies or procedures which is detrimental to an employee;

\*Failure to maintain a safe and productive work environment where employees are not subject to coercion, reprisal, harassment, intimidation or unnecessary hazards;

\*Discrimination in employment on the basis of race, color, gender, age, religion, national origin, marital status or handicap; or

\*Improper or unfair application of administration of employee benefits or conditions of employment such as scheduling, vacations, fringe benefits, promotions, retirement, holidays, performance evaluations, salary, etc.

The grievance procedure shall be the exclusive remedy for employees with appropriate grievances. Implementation of the grievance procedure by an employee does not limit the county's right to proceed with any disciplinary action.

Employees should make every reasonable effort to resolve work-related problems or complaints through normal channels before implementing the grievance procedure. The grievance 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 the right of appeal has been exhausted. Employees who feel they have an appropriate grievance should proceed as follows:

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.

STEP 2 - If the employee is not satisfied with the supervisor's response or the grievance directly involves the employee's immediate supervisor, the employee may appeal the matter 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.

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 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.

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.

Decisions resulting from this grievance procedure shall not be considered as establishing a precedent in any pending or subsequent grievances unless they are officially adopted as county policy. When appropriate, decisions may be made retroactive.

Information concerning employee grievances is considered confidential. Supervisors, and managers who are responsible for investigating and resolving employee complaints or concerns should discuss them only with those individuals who have a need to know or who may have necessary information.

Supervisors and Department Heads shall keep the Human Resource Officer informed of all formal complaints or concerns in progress. The Personnel Officer shall monitor the complaint resolution 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.