



# **WEDDIN SHIRE COUNCIL**

**POLICY NUMBER: 14.21.3**

## **POLICY FOR RESOLUTION OF GRIEVANCES**

**Adopted: 17 August 2017**

## **POLICY FOR RESOLUTION OF GRIEVANCES (POLICY NO. 14.21.3)**

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1. **Title:** Policy for Resolution of Grievances

2. **Number:** Policy Number 14.21.3

3. **Purpose:**

Council is committed to developing and maintaining a productive work environment which amongst other things depends on harmonious and supportive work environment for all staff.

To obtain this aim, Council must recognise the right of staff to express their concerns about work, related issues and acknowledges management's responsibility to identify, prevent and redress problems in the work place.

A useful tool in this procedure is a properly implemented grievance resolution mechanism.

4. **Application**

The policy applies to any work related matter which causes a staff member concern or distress in relation to the work environment and working conditions. Some examples include:

- harassment of any type
- lack of access to developmental opportunities
- interpersonal conflicts
- equipment, furniture or environmental problems

5. **Associated References**

Local Government (State) Award 2010 (clause 31 - Grievance and Dispute Procedures) as amended.

6. **Policy**

6.1 **Principles**

To address the above issues Council has developed policy and guidelines to protect the rights of all staff and to provide procedures for raising and resolving grievances.

Policy and Guidelines are based on the following principles:

- Protect the rights of the individual irrespective of whether he/she reports a grievance, or are the subject of a grievance.
- Provide the framework for the timely and satisfactory resolution of grievances.
- Ensure consistency and equity.
- Ensure that efforts are made to resolve grievances at the level as close to the grievances as possible.
- Provide a choice of people to approach and the actions to take in resolving grievances.
- Prevent minor grievances becoming major grievances.
- Ensure that grievances are handled in confidence.
- Handle the grievances within Council and therefore avoid the necessity of grievances being taken to external agencies.

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### **6.2 Procedures**

Staff with a grievance may choose to raise the grievance by the following:

#### **6.2.1. Directly approaching the person(s) responsible for causing the grievance.**

If you believe you have a grievance about the way in which another staff member is treating you, you should tell the person who is behaving in an unacceptable way that you do not like his/her behaviour, why you do not like it, and to stop.

#### **6.2.2. Approaching a Supervisor**

All supervisors are grievance receivers for staff.

A supervisor will:

- Provide general information about the handling of a grievance information about the options for resolving the grievance.
- Listen in a caring manner and offer support.
- Find out what outcome the grievant wants.
- Try to resolve the grievance through discussion between the supervisor the grievant and the person alleged to be causing the grievance.
- Ensure confidentiality in all matters and decide with the grievant what records if any should be kept.

### **6.3 Grievance Officers**

Where a staff member feels unable to raise the matter with their supervisor for whatever reason, or where a grievance has been lodged and not attended to within reasonable time (i.e. 48 hours), the grievance may be lodged with a Grievance Officer.

Council will have appointed staff who will act as Grievance Officer/s who will -

- Listen to the grievant.
- Ascertain all relevant information about the grievance
- Bring parties involved together to conciliate and agree on a resolution.

Council's Grievance Officers will be Departmental Directors. The grievant has the right to bring to any meeting a support person, (e.g. Union Representative) although there should be an attempt to resolve the matter with their supervisor beforehand.

### **6.4 The Resolution Process**

Grievances are only considered resolved when all parties agree that they are resolved, or when the cause of the grievance has been removed or overcome, or when arrangements have been made to repair or make good any damage and distress suffered by the person with the grievance.

It is a common practice by the Industrial Relations Commission not to hear a grievance unless attempts to resolve the dispute have been taken up and dealt with by Council's Internal Grievance Resolution Procedures.

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### **6.5 Grievance And Dispute Procedures**

- (i) At any stage of the procedure the employee(s) may be represented by their union or its local representative and the council represented by the Association.
- (ii) A grievance or dispute shall be dealt with as follows:
  - (a) The employee(s) shall notify the supervisor of any grievance or dispute and the remedy sought, in writing.
  - (b) A meeting shall be held between the employee(s) and the supervisor to discuss the grievance or dispute and the remedy sought within two working days of notification.
  - (c) If the matter remains unresolved, the employee(s) may request the matter be referred to the head of the department or other authorised officer for discussion.  
A further meeting between all parties shall be held as soon as practicable.
  - (d) If the matter remains unresolved the general manager shall provide the employee(s) with a written response. The response shall include the reasons for not implementing any proposed remedy.
  - (e) Where the matter remains unresolved, it may be referred to the employee's union or representative and by the general manger or other authorised officer to the Association for further discussion between the parties.
- (iii) The Industrial Registrar may be advised of the existence of a dispute at any stage of this procedure.
- (iv) During this procedure and while the matter is in the course of negotiation, conciliation and/or arbitration, work is to proceed as normal.

### **7. Review and Amendment**

- This policy shall be reviewed by September 2017 and thereafter at four (4) yearly intervals, to ensure it meets all statutory requirements and the needs of Council.
- This policy may be amended or cancelled by Council at any time without prior notice or obligation to any employee.

### **8. Adoption**

- This policy commences as from the date of adoption by Council, being 17 August 2017.

### **9. History**

<b>Version</b>	<b>Details</b>
14.1.21	Adopted 20 February 1998
14.21.1	Adopted 20 August 2009
14.21.2	Adopted 21 June 2013
14.21.3	Adopted 17 August 2017