

# Grievance Policy

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## **1. Introduction**

This policy sets out what you need to do if there is something you are unhappy with or you have a concern which can not be addressed through normal day to day working with colleagues.

It covers all companies in the SELDOC Group. Where we say “SELDOC” in this document, we may be referring to any part of the SELDOC Group.

This grievance policy is non-contractual and does not form part of your contract of employment.

## **2. What to do if you have a concern which can not be addressed through “normal” working as described above**

- a) If you have any such concerns or issues, in the first instance, these must be raised informally (this may be verbally or in writing) with your line manager. No one should ever feel vulnerable for raising a concern. By speaking openly with each other and looking to find solutions, we grow as a team and become able to offer an even better service to our patients.

Every effort will be made to resolve your concern as quickly as possible and hopefully within 24 hours of you flagging it. Sometimes, things can take a little longer, but our focus is on speedy resolution so that we can focus on the important work of looking after our patients.

- b) If you feel unable to speak to your manager (this may be because your manager is the subject of your concern or complaint and you have already tried to resolve the issue with him/her) then you should raise these informally with the HR team or a manager of either the same level as or more senior than your manager.

Again, every effort will be made to work with you to resolve your concerns as quickly as possible.

- c) Following this informal process, if you are not satisfied with outcome then you may wish to raise a formal grievance in writing to the HR team or your line manager, or a manager of the same level or senior. To help us, you will need to set out your grievance and the reasons why you feel there was no effective resolution through the informal processes described in this section. You will also need to be clear on what outcome you are looking to achieve through the grievance process. To make this easy for you, we have attached a template which should be used to lodge a grievance.

### **3. SELDOC's Duty of Care**

As a responsible employer who cares about its staff, we have a duty of care to all employees: both the aggrieved party and the person against whom any grievance is lodged. With a focus on taking good care of our people, we will take whatever steps we deem necessary to maintain the wellbeing of all parties to a grievance.

SELDOC has three clear stages as follows: -

### **4. Grievance Hearing**

SELDOC will hold a grievance hearing meeting at which it will carefully consider the complaints made by you. You will have an opportunity to explain your concerns and question any witnesses who are part of your grievance process. This may be in writing rather than person

After the grievance meeting, SELDOC may carry out further investigations and/or hold further grievance meetings as it considers to be appropriate. In these circumstances, such meetings will be arranged without unreasonable delay. The decision of the person hearing the grievance will be confirmed in writing to you. We call this the Grievance Outcome.

### **5. Investigation**

Where a grievance is raised in line with this policy, SELDOC will carry out such reasonable investigation as necessary in order to properly address your grievance. This may be undertaken by a member of staff or by a third party at the sole discretion of SELDOC.

### **6. Appeals**

If you are not satisfied with the grievance Outcome, you may wish to appeal. You can do this as follows:

- you should appeal in writing, by writing a letter to the person named in the letter from SELDOC which confirms the Grievance Outcome
- you should do this within five working days from receipt of your Grievance outcome letter
- your letter should clearly state the grounds upon which you are lodging your appeal

A further hearing will then be arranged in order to consider your appeal. The appeal hearing will be escalated to the next level of management who will hear the appeal. Where the manager in question was directly involved in the issues in dispute or under review, an alternative manager at an appropriate (usually higher) level of seniority will deal with the matter.

The decision of the appeal officer will be notified to you in writing without unreasonable delay and will be final and binding.

## **7. Explaining your grievance and being accompanied**

At all stages of the grievance procedure, you will: -

- be given the opportunity to explain your grievance, say how you think it should be resolved and respond to all information and evidence produced by the Company
- have the opportunity to be accompanied by a work colleague, a trade union representative or an official employed by a trade union (if applicable).

A trade union representative who is not an employed official must have been verified by their union as being competent to accompany you. You and your companion (where there is one) should make every effort to attend grievance meeting(s).

## **8. If you would like a companion to accompany you in the grievance hearing**

To exercise the right to be accompanied, your choice of companion must be reasonable. For instance, it would not normally be reasonable for you to ask to be accompanied by a person whose presence could prejudice the grievance hearing. Nor would it be reasonable for you to ask to be accompanied by a companion who is based at a remote geographical location, when more local, suitable and willing alternates are available.

Your companion may make representations to SELDOC to

- put and sum up your case
- respond on your behalf to any views expressed during the meeting, and
- ask questions.

The companion should not answer questions on your behalf, address the hearing if you do not wish it or prevent you from explaining your case. You may confer privately with your companion at any time during the meeting.

## **9. What to do if you miss or can't be present as a pre-booked meeting**

If you or the person accompanying you is unable to attend any booked meeting at the time specified, you should inform us immediately and we (SELDOC) will try to arrange an alternative time.

## **10. Mediation**

On occasions, it may be helpful to engage the services of an independent professional mediator to assist in resolution of the issues you have raised. You may request this, or the company may propose it as part of the grievance procedure. For mediation to take place, all parties must be in agreement to it. The grievance procedure will be suspended while mediation is taking place.

## **11. What you should not use the grievance procedure for**

The grievance procedure should not be used to complain about dismissal or disciplinary action. If you are dissatisfied with any disciplinary action, you should submit an appeal under the disciplinary procedure.

## **12. Here to help**

If you experience difficulty at any stage of the grievance procedure (e.g. for a reason related to a disability or because English is not your first language), you should discuss the situation with the HR team as soon as possible. SELDOC will make every effort to ensure that the grievance procedure is fair and effective for all parties – this includes making translators available if needed and making reasonable adjustments to accommodate a disability.

## **IMPORTANT NOTE**

If at any time you are concerned about a patient safety issue, you should raise this immediately with your line manager, one of our Medical Directors or the CEO. If you feel unable to speak with any of these people, you should make contact with our Freedom to Speak Up Guardian for a confidential conversation. You should do this without delay. You should never be concerned about raising any such issue – we will be grateful to hear it and we will respond quickly. Our primary value is “Patient-first” and we will live up to it.