

Management of Grievances or Disputes Policy



Australian
Rural Leadership
Foundation

1. Rationale

The Australian Rural Leadership Foundation (ARLF) is committed to ensuring that it has processes in place to resolve disputes or grievances that may arise in the workplace, in relation to its programs, and with business dealings.

2. Definitions

Aggrieved person	The individual/company with a grievance
ARLF	Australian Rural Leadership Foundation

3. Policy Statement

- 3.1 The ARLF will make every effort to resolve a dispute or grievance promptly in a manner that adheres to the principles of natural justice, procedural fairness, sensitivity to the parties and confidentiality.
- 3.2 In any meetings or discussions required to address and/or resolve the matter, the aggrieved person and the ARLF will be given every opportunity to present their case and may elect to have a witness and/or support person present at all discussions. The support person may not be a practising barrister or solicitor.
- 3.3 At any time in the grievance process, the ARLF may seek legal advice. If the aggrieved seeks legal advice, they will meet their own legal costs.

3.4 The steps in the process for resolving a grievance or dispute (involving ARLF staff)

1. The individual with the grievance or dispute raises the matter with the person concerned. If the matter remains unresolved after the aggrieved person has raised it directly with the person concerned, they must then take the matter to the person's manager
2. The individual with the grievance states in writing to the manager what the grievance is, identifying the facts and issues with an indication of what resolution is being sought.

At this point, all parties involved should be given the opportunity of a restorative meeting to resolve the matter. All parties must consent to a restorative meeting.

3. If the grievance or dispute is unable to be resolved by the manager or through a restorative meeting, it is referred to the Chief Executive.

If the issue concerns the CE, or the CE is unable to come to a resolution, the ARLF may procure the services of an independent mediator who has the approval of both parties.

4. Based on the material gathered, the ARLF will decide on the merits of the grievance and will give written recommendations on options to resolve the grievance. Options can include:
 - I. affirming the decisions and actions that prompted the grievance (effectively dismissing the grievance)
 - II. requesting parties seek mediation through restorative processes
 - III. recommending performance discussions occur
 - IV. initiating development for the individual or individuals in relation to behaviours, approaches and practices.
 - V. recommend disciplinary action be taken.
5. If the matter remains unresolved following mediation, a final avenue involves an appeal process. An appeal can be made when all procedures outlined in this policy have been exhausted.

3.5 The steps in the process for resolving a grievance or dispute (involving ARLF staff and external parties - board members, Associates, and all individuals engaged in the ARLF's activities and programs)

1. The individual with the grievance or dispute raises the matter with the person concerned.
2. If the matter remains unresolved after the aggrieved person has raised it directly with the person concerned, they must then take the matter to the person's organisation
3. The individual with the grievance states in writing to the relevant person in that organisation what the grievance is, identifying the facts and issues with an indication of what resolution is being sought.

At this point, all parties involved should be given the opportunity of a restorative meeting to resolve the matter. All parties must consent to a restorative meeting.

4. If the grievance or dispute is unable to be resolved by the organisation or through a restorative meeting, either party may procure the services of an independent mediator who has the approval of both parties.
5. If the matter remains unresolved following mediation, a final avenue involves an appeal process. An appeal can be made when all procedures outlined in this policy have been exhausted.

3.5 Appeal process

1. An application for appeal can be made in the following circumstances:
 - I. when all procedures outlined in this policy have been exhausted;
 - II. when the appellant disputes their exclusion from a leadership program;
 - III. when the appellant disputes the need for, or the outcome of, an Individual Intervention Plan based on perceived unfair or erroneous application of policies.
2. The appeal must be made in writing to the CE and must:
 - i. outline the full nature of the matter and the efforts taken to resolve it;
 - ii. set out the grounds for the appeal; and
 - iii. include all appropriate supporting documentation.
3. A review panel made up of an ARLF board member, the CE and an independent nominee acceptable to the ARLF and the appellant will be convened to consider the appeal. The chairperson of the review panel will determine whether the appeal reasonably constitutes a genuine grievance and whether it will proceed.
4. If the appeal proceeds, the review panel will:
 - i. meet to consider the matter with access to all relevant documents
 - ii. request any additional information it deems necessary to gain a better understanding of the situation
 - iii. make a decision on the grievance/dispute having due regard to the recommendations and views of all parties
 - iv. advise in writing to the appellant and other relevant parties of the decision and provide the reasons for the decision.
5. The decision of the review panel will be final.

4. Scope and application

This policy applies to ARLF staff, board members, Associates, and all individuals engaged in the ARLF's activities and programs.

5. Responsibilities and ownership of this policy

Policy approval	ARLF Board of Directors
Implementation	Chief Executive; Director : Learning , Director Partnerships
Review	Chief Executive
Improvement	Chief Executive

6. Resources

No additional resources will be needed, although some changes in work practices and program guidelines may be required.

7. Review schedule

Initially	June 2013
Periodic	Every two years (April 2017)
Reviewed	September 2020

8. Related documentation

- Individual intervention plans of the Australian Rural Leadership Foundation.
- Code of Conduct Policy Work Health and Safety Policy