



LAC LA BICHE COUNTY PROCEDURE

TITLE: Conflict Resolution Standard Operating Procedure PROCEDURE NO: CS-03-015-07

SPECIAL NOTES/CROSS REFERENCE: POLICY CS-03-015 AMENDMENT DATE:

1.0 General Statement

The County has instituted this SOP to provide employees with an outlet to raise concerns regarding any conflict in the workplace or dissatisfaction with respect to issues related to their employment in an open and fair manner with provisions made to ensure their prompt and reasonable resolution. Under no circumstance should any employee fear discrimination or reprisal in the workplace as a result of the filing of a complaint.

The following conflicts should be reported and the County shall strive to address them with reasonable resolutions:

- Disputes with co-workers or managerial staff with unwanted and unresolved consequences;
- Perceived unfair or inequitable treatment;
- Harassment whether sexual, discriminatory, or personal in nature;
- Abuse of authority;
- Administration of County policies and procedures.

2.0 General Conflict Reporting Procedure

- Employees are encouraged to discuss the unwanted behaviour or actions with the offending party as the situation dictates.
- Under ideal circumstances, the two parties shall reach a reasonable resolution without the necessity of the filing of a formal complaint.
- In the event that a discussion is not feasible or fails to reach a reasonable resolution, a formal complaint may be filed.

3.0 Reporting

Complainants should record the details of the unwanted circumstance(s), the names of any applicable witnesses, and any attempts made to resolve the issue.

Formal complaints stemming from unresolved employee or managerial conflicts shall be submitted, in writing with any pertinent documentation, to a supervisor, General Manager or the Manager of Human Resources.

Formal complaints shall be reviewed and investigated.

Formal complaints must be submitted within thirty (30) days from the date of the alleged incident(s).

In all cases where formal complaints have been lodged, it is important to maintain a policy of strict confidentiality between the complainant and the Responder (manager / HR). For investigative purposes, the offending party may be notified.

Anonymous complaints shall not be reviewed.

4.0 Resolutions

If an apology is made by the offending party and the Complainant accepts the apology, this may be viewed as a reasonable resolution depending on the circumstances.

All attempts shall be made to reach a reasonable resolution through mediation of the complaint with both parties' involvement.

5.0 Where the complaint is substantiated

In the event that a complaint is substantiated and a reasonable solution to stop the unwanted behaviour or action through mediation is not possible, the following actions shall be taken for the offending party (in no specific order):

- Written warning/reprimand;
- Transfer or demotion, and in some instances both a transfer and a demotion;
- Education and training;
- Suspension;
- Termination of employment.

6.0 Where the complaint is not substantiated

In the event that a complaint is not substantiated due to lack of evidence or other reasons, both parties shall be informed as to the rationale used. The Complainant shall be notified first.

Both parties should be reminded that an unsubstantiated complaint does not necessarily mean that it was filed under false or frivolous pretences.

A complainant may request that the investigation be re-opened in the event that pertinent new evidence can be provided, or a reprisal due to the allegation has occurred.

7.0 Records

The County shall keep on file all formal complaints, the accompanying documentation, and the findings of any investigation.

Information from a previous investigation resulting in a substantiated complaint may be used for review and consideration purposes in the event of a new allegation.

8.0 False or Frivolous Complaints

Employees should be aware and realize that a formal complaint against another employee is a serious allegation with repercussions.

Where a complaint is found to be either false or frivolous, or where supporting documentation for a complaint has been falsified, the complainant or witness may be subject to disciplinary measures up to and including termination of employment.

9.0 Responsibilities

9.1 Employees

- Employees are required to fully comply with the Conflict Resolution SOP.
- Employees shall be treated fairly throughout the process, as either a complainant, or alleged offending party.
- Employees shall be responsible for maintaining confidentiality regarding their involvement, and the complaint itself.
- Employees shall co-operate with any investigations in relation to complaints.

9.2 Management / Human Resources

- Management and Human Resources shall be responsible for enacting preventative measures to ensure a workplace that is free from harassment, and for the communication of policy and procedures contained herein.
- Management and Human Resources shall receive and address properly filed complaints in an appropriate fashion.
- In the event that the Complainant and the offending Party are engaged in a subordinate-supervisor relationship, they may be physically removed from each other on a temporary basis, and may require a change in their reporting relationship.
- Management and Human Resources shall investigate, or co-investigate any complaints, claims and documentation therein.
- Management and Human Resources shall attempt to reach a reasonable resolution to the conflict and inform the complainant and the offending party of possible resolutions available.

“Original Signed”
Chief Administrative Officer

November 8, 2013
Date