



Grievance Policy

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1. **Purpose**

The purpose of this policy is to establish an efficient and structured means for employees to address concerns or conflicts in a transparent, productive, and solutions-focused manner.

2. **Applicability**

This policy applies to all Buncombe County employees subject to the authority of the County Manager. Where there is conflict with any department-specific policy, this document will supersede.

3. **Policy**

- 3.1. The County acknowledges that disagreements are normal and sometimes even healthy for an organization. Employees should feel free to respectfully express differences of opinion and constructively address and resolve them. While most disagreements can be solved informally, some are complex and deserve additional resources to assist and support all involved to find resolution. As such, the County has established this internal policy to provide employees with a structured process to address conflicts or concerns in an efficient, fair, transparent, and consistent manner.
- 3.2. The County intends the grievance policy to be an effective means for employees to resolve concerns and challenges, and to improve their work environments. The County discourages the perception that grievances are inherently negative or undesirable situations, complaints, or problems. Employees who file a grievance or participate in the grievance process will not be retaliated against by the County. Employees have the right to present a grievance in accordance with this policy and the grievance procedures, without any form of interference, coercion, restraint, discrimination, penalty, or reprisal.
- 3.3. Grievances may be filed to resolve conflicts among individuals or individual concerns based upon an event or condition that affects the circumstances under which an employee works, such as misinterpretation, unfair application, or lack of an established policy pertaining to employment conditions. Employees may opt to resolve concerns and conflicts through informal efforts, though employees should take into the account the timeframe to file a grievance in the event the conflict or concern is not resolved expeditiously. In all circumstances, employees are expected to voice concerns and

address conflicts in a respectful, responsible, timely, and solutions-focused manner according to the Grievance Procedures.

- 3.4. Grievances must be filed in writing according to the requirements and timeframes specified in the Grievance Procedure. Grievances that are filed untimely, incomplete, or not applicable under this policy will be dismissed.
- 3.5. The grievance policy and procedure are not applicable to the following issues:
 - Disciplinary actions
 - Reports of harassment, discrimination, or retaliation
 - Employment selection decisions
 - Placement on administrative leave
 - Requests for reasonable accommodations
 - Classification and compensation determinations
 - Insurance and ancillary benefits
- 3.6. Employees are expected to act in good faith when filing a grievance, based on the reasonable person standard. Employees who file grievances for malicious, retaliatory, or unlawful reasons will be disciplined in accordance with County policy. The right of an employee to file a grievance does not include immunity for unacceptable personal conduct, performance deficiencies or policy violations. Nothing in this policy is intended to interfere with legitimate employment decisions or intended to prohibit employees from filing complaints of unlawful actions or treatment in accordance with County policy, or applicable State and Federal laws.
- 3.7. All documentation, records, and reports will be retained for a minimum of three years and will be held by the Human Resources Department. These records will be subject to review by the grievant, the employee's Department Director, the County Manager, or their designee, and/or Human Resources Director.

4. **Policy Non-Compliance**

Employees willfully violating the terms and conditions of this policy may be subject to appropriate disciplinary action, up to and including dismissal.

5. **Audit**

All policies for Buncombe County may be subject to audit or review as outlined in the [Internal Auditor's Statement](#).

6. **Definitions**

- 6.1 **Grievance:** A claim or complaint of an event or condition which affects the circumstances under which an employee works, allegedly caused my misinterpretation, unfair application, bullying or lack of established policy pertaining to employment conditions.

7. Approval and Revision History

Policy Origination Date:	11/07/2023
Requires Board Approval:	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Board Approval Date:	11/07/2023
Revision History:	Enter Dates and changes

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