



GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE

Purpose

The purpose of this Grievance Procedure is to settle grievances or complaints fairly and quickly in a neutral, unbiased, and credible fashion.

Open Door Policy

Keisho has an open door policy regarding grievances. This open door policy encourages employees/volunteers who have a concern to first approach the General Manager (GM) for an informal discussion and attempt at resolution. The GM is the point-of-contact between employees/volunteers and the Keisho Board of Directors. The GM has the responsibility to attempt to resolve conflicts amicably.

If the parties are unable to resolve the dispute informally, the aggrieved employee/volunteer is required to follow the grievance procedure steps outlined below.

Confidentiality

It is important that confidentiality be maintained throughout the grievance procedure. All parties involved in grievance procedures should refrain from discussing the content of particular grievances with uninvolved persons. In the event the employee/volunteer decides to appeal, the President will create an Appeal Panel composed of individuals that are neutral, unbiased, and credible. Discretion will aid the formation of such a group.

Prohibition of Retaliation

Any retaliation against an employee/volunteer who brings a complaint is prohibited and will subject the retaliator to discipline up to and including discharge.



Grievance Procedure Steps

Step 1: Raise the grievance in writing

The employee/volunteer should bring the grievance to the attention of the GM in writing without unreasonable delay, normally within one month of the incident (or final incident) which gives rise to the complaint. If the problem is between the employee/volunteer and the GM or if the employee/volunteer believes the GM may have a conflict of interest in the case, then the matter should be brought to the attention of the President in writing. Should both the GM and the President either not be available or if the employee/volunteer prefers, the individual may submit the written complaint to any member of Keisho's Board of Directors.

In the written grievance, the employee/volunteer must detail the circumstances of the grievance with dates, times, witnesses, etc.; describe facts and observable behaviors; and avoid insulting or abusive language. In order for the GM to be fully informed, the employee/volunteer should also attach any supporting documents that support their case. Where employees/volunteers have difficulty expressing themselves because of language or other difficulties, they may seek the help of colleagues to assist in preparing or translating the written grievance.

Step 2: Invitation to a grievance meeting

The GM will invite the employee/volunteer to attend a meeting without unavoidable delay (usually within seven days of receiving the written grievance) to discuss the matter. The GM will state in the meeting invitation that if the employee/volunteer sought the assistance of a colleague to prepare the grievance, the employee/volunteer is entitled to be accompanied by that colleague. It is understood that the colleague is present to ensure that the employee's/volunteer's written grievance is interpreted and addressed by the GM according to these steps, but that the colleague may not speak on behalf of the employee/volunteer and cannot answer questions put directly to the employee/volunteer. The colleague may facilitate the meeting as employee/volunteer's translator, if needed. The GM may ask for further supporting documents before the grievance meeting.



Step 3: Grievance Meetings

When possible, a note-taker, who must be uninvolved in the case, will take down a record of the proceedings. The GM will introduce the meeting, read out the grounds of the grievance, ask if the grievance is correct, and require the employee/volunteer to provide clarification regarding details of the grievance if unclear.

The employee/volunteer will be given the opportunity to put forward her/his case and say how they would like to see it resolved. The employee may call witnesses and refer to any documents previously provided to the GM.

The GM may question the employee/volunteer and any witnesses. The employee/volunteer will be given the opportunity to sum up their grievance but may not introduce any new complaints.

The meeting may be adjourned by the GM if it is considered necessary to undertake further investigation. Any necessary investigations will be carried out to establish the facts of the case.

The GM may investigate the complaint by inviting the individual named in the grievance to a meeting. The individual named in the grievance may also feel aggrieved and may write a counter-grievance. In such cases, the individual should follow the procedures outlined in step 1.

In the meeting with the individual named in the grievance, the GM will introduce the meeting, read out the grounds of the grievance, and provide the opportunity for the individual to respond to the complaints made against them and say how they would like to see it resolved. The individual may call witnesses and refer to any documents previously provided to the GM. The GM may question the individual and any witnesses.

The GM will adjourn the meetings before a decision is taken to allow time for reflection and proper consideration.



Step 4: Decision by the General Manager

Having considered the grievance and responses, the GM will give her/his decision regarding the case in writing to the employee/volunteer and the subject of the grievance within seven days of the final meeting. If appropriate, the decision will describe what action the GM intends to take to resolve the grievance or if the grievance is not upheld, will explain the reasons. The GM will include notification to the employee/volunteer of her/his right of appeal and describe the appeal procedure.

Step 5: Appeal

If the employee/volunteer wishes to appeal the grievance decision of the GM, she or he must do so by writing to the President, or if the President has already been involved in an earlier stage of the procedure, to the Secretary of the Board. The appeal must be made in writing within seven days of receiving the written grievance decision from the GM. The appeal must state the reasons for the appeal and any documents submitted in support of the appeal must be attached.

Arrangements for the appeal meeting will be made by the President (or Secretary of the Board if appropriate). The President will form an Appeal Panel constituting the President and two additional Keicho board members. The board members hearing the appeal should have had neither direct involvement nor conflict of interest in the case. The President may solicit all previous meeting notes from the GM and other documents related to the case. The employee/volunteer is entitled to a companion at the appeal meeting.

The appeal meeting should be held without unavoidable delay. The President will ensure that a note-taker is present. The President will introduce the meeting, read out the appeal, ask if the appeal is correct, and require the employee/volunteer to provide clarification regarding details of the appeal if unclear.

The appeal meeting may be adjourned by the Appeal Panel if it is considered necessary to undertake further investigation. The meeting will be reconvened as soon as possible.

Having considered the grievance and responses, the Appeal Panel will give their decision regarding the case in writing to the employee/volunteer and the subject of the grievance within seven days of the appeal meeting. If appropriate, the decision will



Washington Japanese Heritage Center (Keisho Center)

ワシントン日本語継承センター

keisho.org / facebook.com/keishocenter / info@keisho.org

P.O. Box 142

Cabin John, MD 20818

describe what action the GM must to take to resolve the grievance or if the grievance is not upheld, will explain the reasons. The decision of the Appeal Panel shall be final.