



Parent/Volunteer/Staff Grievances

A grievance is a complaint regarding the application of the volunteer policies and procedures. The grievance process is set up for handling these complaints in an orderly and fair manner. All adults should seek resolution to problems through open communications and informal discussions.

Differences in opinions, work styles, or personalities often cause disagreements and grievances between two people or among groups of people, whether the individuals hold volunteer positions or council staff positions. Black Diamond encourages volunteers to tell their story, the volunteer grievance procedure. Whenever possible, we ask that adults strive to resolve problems informally and confidentially.

However, if an informal attempt at resolution fails, a volunteer may choose a formal method such as a volunteer grievance procedure. Council staff or volunteers should not criticize or penalize a volunteer for filing a grievance form and initiating the formal grievance procedure. For the volunteer grievance procedure to work, all parties must want it to work; its success is mutually beneficial to the council and volunteer.



Volunteer Grievance Steps/Procedures

Step One:

If a volunteer has a concern or conflict, they should take it to the person involved first and negotiate for a mutually beneficial resolution.

Step Two:

If informal communications fail, the people involved should meet with their report-to supervisor and/or the Membership Support Manager. The parties should try to resolve the conflict and specify the specific steps necessary to move forward. The volunteer filing the grievance should complete a volunteer grievance form at this point. This form should be submitted to the report-to supervisor and/or Membership Support Manager. The volunteer grievance form may also be submitted online. You can find the [GRIEVANCE FORM](#) on the volunteer resources page of our website. (Preferred method of submittal is online.) This activates the formal volunteer grievance with Girl Scouts of Black Diamond Council. The report-to supervisor and/or the Membership Support Manager should forward a copy of the completed grievance form to their immediate supervisor and the Volunteer Resource Manager at this time.

Step Three:

If step two does not solve the problem, the Volunteer Resource Manager should be contacted to provide assistance. The Volunteer Resource Manager will work with a volunteer grievance management team that consists of, but not limited to the Director of Volunteer Development and the Chief Mission Delivery Officer.

The volunteer grievance management team will respond within ten business days to the volunteer who filed the grievance.

Appeals:

The Chief Mission Delivery Officer and the grievance management team make all final decisions. No appeals are accepted after step three of the grievance process.



Tips for volunteers filing a grievance

- Policy – Review our Volunteer Policies carefully.
- Facts – Be objective when writing a complaint. Grievances should be directly related to policies, guidelines, procedures, etc.
- Documentation – Keep detailed notes about the complaint and all communication.
- Discretion – Avoid discussing the grievance with other volunteers, unless completely necessary. Grievances are usually sensitive and sometimes personal matters that can be upsetting.
- Social Media – Using social media and email to vent, share information about the grievance and/or confront another adult is considered unacceptable volunteer behavior. The use of social media and email, in our experience, escalates conflict.
- Problem Solving - The report-to person or supervisor is usually the best person to handle the volunteer’s complaint properly and quickly. Ideally, the volunteer discusses the matter with her or him as soon as possible after the grievance occurs.
- Timely feedback – Often times, we wait until the issue becomes “the straw that broke the camel’s back”. Address issues individually rather than a discussing a list of things that are bothering you.
- Patience – Grievances that make it to the Council Headquarters level will take time to resolve. We ask for your patience in resolving these matters.



Volunteer Grievance Form for Complaint/Concern

Name of Volunteer Completing Form: _____

Phone Number: _____ Email: _____

Address: _____

This form is to be used to support the grievance process for complaints that policies and/or procedures related to a volunteer's position are not being administered properly as applied to her or him.

Provide a brief statement of policy or procedure that has allegedly been misapplied, misinterpreted or violated.

Provide a brief statement of impact on this action.

What is your desired outcome?

Volunteer's Signature: _____ Date: _____