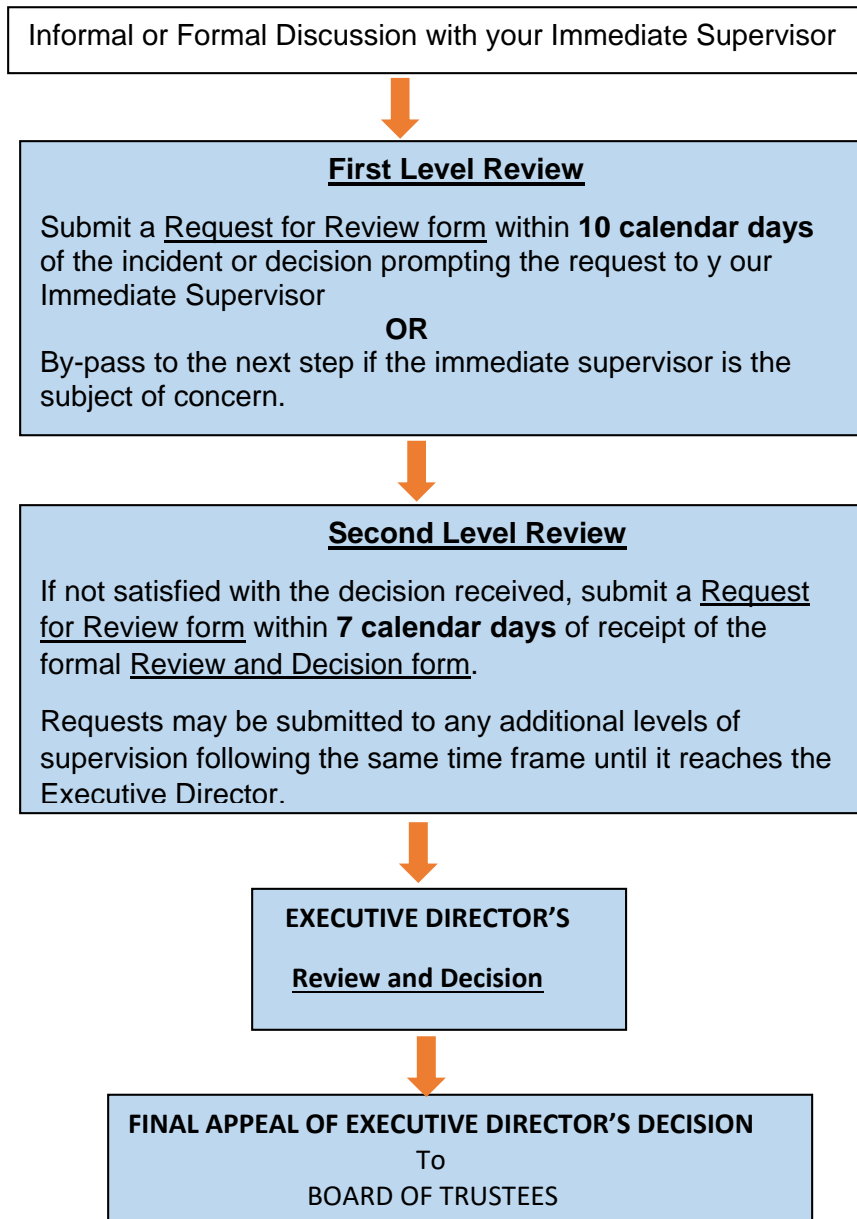


Problem Solving Procedure

Overview

PCCLD is committed to providing a harmonious work environment for all employees based on mutual respect and accountability. Part of this commitment is encouraging an open and frank atmosphere in which any problem, complaint, suggestion, or question receives attention and a timely response from PCCLD supervisors and/or members of the Leadership Team. Such open discussion provides opportunities for constructive criticism, clarification and feedback and can result in mutually beneficial solutions. You are encouraged to utilize both informal discussion and the formal Problem-Solving Procedure, as illustrated below, to address and resolve matters in a timely manner.



Problem Solving Procedure

When You Have a Concern

From time to time, you may disagree with an action, decision or application of a policy, procedure or practice directed toward or directly affecting you. You may also believe a condition of employment or decision affecting you is unjust or inequitable in your opinion. When such concerns arise, you can seek clarification or resolution through the voluntary use of the Problem-Solving Procedure.

Example subjects that might make use of the problem-solving procedure include, but are not limited to:

- Complaints of harassment, intimidation, discrimination or retaliation in violation of PCCLD policy
- Application of a policy, procedure or practice
- Concerns over working relationships, conditions or the work environment
- Administration of employee benefits
- Application of pay policies or guidelines
- Issues arising from an employee's performance evaluation
- Actions as part of the performance improvement process other than suspension with full pay or termination

You will not be penalized, formally or informally, or retaliated against, for voicing a complaint with PCCLD in a reasonable, business-like manner, or for using the Problem-Solving Procedure. This Problem-Solving Procedure is purely voluntary. Therefore, you may discontinue the formal procedure at any step.

Assistance from Human Resources

The Human Resources Department is available to assist you in making use of the procedure. Human Resources can counsel and advise you, assists in putting problems in writing, visit with your supervisor(s), if necessary, and direct you to the next level of supervision for review, if available. If a second level of review is not available, you will be directed to the Executive Director for review of the problem.

The Human Resources Department may conduct or facilitate timely investigations and is responsible for ensuring timely progression and response.

Problem Solving Procedure

HOW TO: RAISING A CONCERN

INFORMAL DISCUSSION

PCCLD believes in solving problems at the lowest level in the organization. As such, many concerns are swiftly resolved through informal communication between you and your immediate supervisor. Conversations that are specific, honest and direct in nature can help answer questions, clarify matters, resolve miscommunications and promote helpful exchanges of information.

FIRST LEVEL REVIEW

Should such informal communication with your immediate supervisor fail to resolve the issue to your satisfaction, or if you believe the issue is best addressed through a more formal means of communication, you may initiate the Problem-Solving Procedure by completing a [Request for Review or Appeal](#) form. Forms are available on Portal under the Documents tab or in the Human Resources Department. [Request for Review or Appeal](#) forms may not be submitted anonymously nor may you complete and submit a form on behalf of another employee. The Human Resources Department is available to assist you in initiating a formal review.

Step 1



Within **10 calendar days** after the incident occurs, complete a Request for Review or Appeal form addressing the work-related decisions, actions or behaviors directed toward and/or directly affecting you.

If your supervisor is the subject of the problem, is unavailable, or if you believe the nature of the concern would make it inappropriate to contact that person, seek assistance of the Human Resources Department to refer the problem to the next level of supervision. Human Resources is responsible for informing the immediate supervisor when the matter is referred to the next level of supervision.

The supervisor signs the [Request for Review or Appeal](#) form as received. Supervisors may seek the assistance of Human Resources to investigate the matter or problem presented, as deemed appropriate. Human Resources facilitates the review process, helping assure a response is provided back to you, as timely as practicable.



Responding supervisors have **7 calendar days** from the date the [Request for Review or Appeal](#) form is considered “received,” as identified by the receiver’s signature and date, to investigate the circumstances and provide written response back to you, the employee initiating the request.

Problem Solving Procedure

After consulting with the next level Leadership Team member(s), as may be appropriate, the supervisor and another member of the Leadership Team present the written response to you, utilizing the [Review and Decision](#) form. Supplemental pages and results of any investigation may be attached as needed. The Supervisor documents the discussion.

If the problem is resolved after the first level of review, you should acknowledge your receipt and acceptance of the appropriate resolution on the [Review and Decision](#) form. If you are not satisfied with the decision, you should acknowledge receipt of the Review and Decision form and consider use of the next level of review.

SECOND LEVEL REVIEW

Should you not be satisfied with the results of the review, the matter may be taken sequentially to the next level of review as designated by the organizational reporting structure. You may seek assistance from the Human Resources Department to present copies of the original request, the response, and your reason for disagreement with the decision and preferred resolution.

Step 2

Present the problem in writing to the next level supervisor, if available, or to the Executive Director. Appeals to the next level must be supported with all previous requests for review and written responses. Appeals to higher levels of supervision may be sought, as available, by repeating this step until the matter is appealed to the Executive Director.



Requests for a second level review must be made in writing within 7 calendar days of receipt of the written response ([Review and Decision](#) form).

The next level supervisor or Executive Director review and consider the problem. Further investigation of the matter may also take place. You may be called upon to meet with the next level supervisor or Executive Director before making a decision.



The next level supervisor or Executive Director will inform you in writing of the final decision within 7 calendar days.

Problem Solving Procedure

A copy of the decision is forwarded to the Human Resources Department. **The Executive Director has full authority to make any adjustment deemed appropriate to resolve the problem.**

If the problem is resolved after the second level of review, you should acknowledge receipt and acceptance of the appropriate resolution on the [Review and Decision](#) form. If you are not satisfied with the decision, you should acknowledge receipt of the [Review and Decision](#) form and consider repeating this step if additional levels of supervision are available. Otherwise you may consider use of a Final Review-Appeal to the Board of Trustees.

FINAL REVIEW APPEAL TO THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES



Step 3

As a final level of review, you may appeal the decision of the Executive Director to the President of Board of Trustees **within 7 calendar days**.

The Human Resources Director or Manager is available to provide guidance and assistance to you in requesting the Board's final review. The request must include any previous requests for review and written responses. A copy of the [Request for Review or Appeal](#) form must also be provided to the Executive Director.

The Board President may identify a Board Committee comprised of a minimum of three members of the Board of Trustees to review all written information previously submitted on the matter and conduct further investigation as it sees fit. You may be called upon to meet with the Board Committee. The Board Committee presents its findings and recommendations to the full Board of Trustees who vote on the matter and render a final decision. **The Board of Trustee's decision is the final step of the Problem-Solving Procedure.**

Problem Solving Procedure

ADMINISTRATIVE CONSIDERATIONS

Employees Reporting to the Executive Director

Employees reporting to the Executive Director follow the same procedure outlined in First Level Review. However, should the problem be with the Executive Director, employees reporting to the Executive Director may make their concern known in writing by contacting the Board President, his/her designated Board member or Board Committee **within 10 calendar days** of the action or decision prompting the employee's initial request for review.

As a Second Level Review, employees reporting directly to the Executive Director **may appeal** the decision of the Executive Director to the President of the Board of Trustees **within 7 calendar days** as the final step in the problem-solving process.

Timeframes for Response / Referral to Next Level

Some matters may require additional time to adequately review and respond to an employee's formal [Request for Review or Appeal](#). In such cases, PCCLD's preliminary response is provided to the requesting employee within the 7 calendar days. The preliminary response may indicate what aspect of the review requires additional time and a reasonable estimate of the necessary extension to respond. Should PCCLD be closed for business for all or part of a calendar day, the day is not counted in determining the timeliness of requests for review or responses.

Whenever additional review time is required, the time limit for employees to refer the matter to the next level begins when a final written response is provided and acknowledged received by the employee's dated signature.

Any time a written response, or preliminary response as described in this procedure, is not provided by PCCLD within the designated number of calendar days, employees may skip the current level of review and refer the problem in writing to the next available level for review and consideration.

Timely use of the Problem-Solving Procedure is important to properly investigate and address the matter as soon as practical. Consideration may be given to employees' requests to utilize the Problem-Solving Procedure beyond the stated time limit.

Problem Solving Procedure

ADMINISTRATIVE CONSIDERATIONS, cont.

Employees must complete a [Request for Review or Appeal](#) form and include a written explanation of why the matter was not brought to PCCLD's attention in a timely manner. Requests submitted after the required timeframe should be forwarded to the Human Resources Department. The matter is brought to the attention of the supervisor or Leadership Team member designated to receive the request and the Executive Director. The Executive Director, in consultation with the supervisor or Leadership Team member, may approve or deny the use of the Problem-Solving Procedure.

Employees needing additional time to formally request review of a decision to the next level in the Problem-Solving Procedure may submit a written request to the Leadership Team member designated to receive the [Request for Review or Appeal](#). Such requests must be made in advance of the deadline to appeal the decision. Extension requests must include a proposed new date for submitting an appeal and an explanation. If approved, a new deadline for submitting the appeal is communicated in writing back to the requesting employee. Otherwise employees' appeals of lower-level decisions must be received within the existing timeframe to be considered further.

Representation

As a voluntary, internal problem-solving procedure, participation is limited to PCCLD employees directly involved in the matter under review and Board of Trustee members at appropriate levels. No formal legal representation of employees is allowed in this internal review procedure. Of course, employees may consult with legal counsel on their own time, at their own expense, outside of the internal review procedure.

Confidentiality

Confidentiality is maintained by PCCLD to the degree practical to do so when the progress of the requested review, and any related investigation, is not interfered with or impeded as a result of confidentiality.

Out of respect for the employee making use of the problem-solving process, and to help maintain confidentiality to the degree practical to do so, all employees, including those involved in investigations, are expected to keep the matter confidential, not communicating with anyone other than those with a business need-to-know about their involvement.

Problem Solving Procedure

ADMINISTRATIVE CONSIDERATIONS, cont.

Use of the Problem-Solving Procedure is not reflected in the employee's personnel file. Restricted, confidential records of all written requests and responses under this procedure are maintained by the Human Resources Department. Employee and responding supervisors at each level are responsible for submitting all applicable materials and documentation to the Human Resources Department for the files.

Retaliation Not Tolerated

Retaliation against employees making use of this voluntary procedure, or against employees cooperating with related investigations, is strictly prohibited by PCCLD. Any employee who believes he or she is the subject of such retaliation should bring the matter to the immediate attention of the Human Resources Manager. Anyone found to have engaged in retaliation is subject to the performance improvement process, up to and including termination.

Termination of the Problem-Solving Procedure

Absent timely requests for review by employees initiating the Problem-Solving Procedure to the next level, or written notice or approval from responding supervisors for an extension to respond, the Problem-Solving Procedure is stopped. Employees may also voluntarily withdraw a [Request for Review](#) at any time by providing written notice to the Human Resources Director or Manager. The Human Resources Director or Manager notifies those involved in the Problem-Solving process at the current level and those previously involved, as applicable.

This internal review procedure may cease upon the commencement of legal action against PCCLD by an employee or a governmental agency at the direction of the Executive Director, or if applicable, the Board President when a matter involves the Executive Director.