

Grievance Policy and Guidelines

Document control				
Author		Group HR		
Version		6.0		
Date		October 2023		
Version control				
Version	Date	Status	Author	Details of change
1.0	April 2003			
2.0	January 2007			
3.0	October 2009			
4.0	April 2019		Group HR	Separation of Disciplinary & Grievance Policy into two separate policies and Grievance Policy update.
5.0	June 2021	Update	Group HR	Additional clause added in section 2
6.0	October 2023	Reviewed	Group HR	No change

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1. About this Policy

This procedure is in place to enable employees to raise legitimate grievances about their employment. The procedure provides for an open and fair way for employees to make known their problems, for these to be investigated and where possible for grievances to be resolved quickly and amicably. This policy applies to all Avant Homes staff, regardless of length of service, including temporary or fixed term employees.

2. Grievance

In any organisation, employees may occasionally have problems or concerns about their work, working environment or working relationships.

The purpose of this policy is to formally set out how the company will deal with employees problems and concerns in a fair, equitable, consistent and expedient manner with the aim of seeking an amicable resolution.

The policy (and associated process) does not confer any contractual rights. It only applies whilst an employee is employed by the Avant Homes Group.

It is essential to the proper working of this policy and associated process that any employee raising a grievance should continue to work normally (wherever possible) whilst the process is being followed.

All reasonable measures should be taken to address and resolve issues through informal discussions between all relevant parties prior to invoking the formal process, as in many cases this can resolve matters. Should the employee wish to seek advice on how best to proceed with an issue or potential grievance, they should contact Group HR.

It is not permitted to record any informal or formal meeting, discussion or conversation without prior consent from all parties. Any recording made will constitute personal information for the purposes of the UK General Data Protection Regulation; we therefore consider any recording without consent a breach of this regulation and wholly inappropriate.

If the Company has been advised that the employee has a condition covered by the Equality Act 2010 (Disability) which may prevent them from fully participating in the process without additional specialist support, the company will work with the individual to obtain such support prior to the process being instigated.

Raising a Grievance – Stage 1

If, after exhausting all informal opportunity to resolve the issue(s), an employee can decide to raise a formal grievance.

The employee should put full details of their grievance/complaint in writing as soon as is reasonably practicable after the incident/situation first occurred i.e. without reasonable delay. This letter or email should be forwarded to their Line Manager. If the grievance relates directly or indirectly to the employee's Line Manager, then it should be put in writing to the Line Managers' Manager. A copy of the grievance/complaint must also be sent to Group HR.

Meeting – Stage 2

Upon instruction from the Line Manager, Group HR will invite the employee, in writing, to attend a meeting to discuss the grievance and how they think it should be resolved. The letter will advise the employee of the location, date and time of the meeting and who will be in attendance. The employee will be given the right to be accompanied to the meeting by a work colleague of their choice or a certified Trade Union representative. The employee, and their representative, must take all reasonable steps to attend the meeting.

The employee's representative is permitted to put forward and sum up the employee's case, respond on behalf of the employee to any views expressed during the meeting, and confer with the employee. They are not permitted to answer questions on behalf of the employee, address the hearing if the employee does not wish them to, or to prevent the company from explaining their case.

The purpose of the grievance meeting is to discuss the issue(s) in more detail. It is possible that as a result of the grievance meeting, the line/hearing manager will need to investigate further and may need to speak to other employees as part of the investigation. The line/hearing manager, may also need to arrange a further meeting with the employee as part of their investigation.

After the meeting, the company will inform the employee in writing of the decision which has been made by the hearing manager, in respect of the grievance. An explanation of the reasons for the decision will also be provided. The employee will also be advised of their right to appeal against the decision if he/she is not satisfied with it.

Appeal – Stage 3

If the employee wishes to appeal against the decision made by the hearing manager, they must inform Group HR in writing within five working days of receipt of the outcome letter.

If the employee informs the company of their wish to appeal, the company will invite them to attend an appeal meeting with a senior manager whom has not been involved in the initial process. Where possible, this meeting will be arranged to take place within ten days of receipt of the appeal.

A representative from Group HR would also be in attendance at an appeal meeting and the employee will be informed of their right to be accompanied at the appeal meeting by a work colleague of their choice, a certified trade union representative or an official employed by a trade union. The employee, and their representative, must take all reasonable steps to attend the appeal meeting.

After the appeal meeting the employee will be informed in writing of the final decision in respect of their grievance. There will be no further right of appeal.

3. Grievance and Disciplinary

If the employee raises a grievance during a disciplinary process, the disciplinary process may be temporarily suspended in order to deal with the grievance. Where the grievance and disciplinary cases are related, it may be necessary to deal with both issues concurrently. If the issues are not related, the processes may run in parallel.