



NEW ZEALAND PUBLIC SERVICE ASSOCIATION

Te Pūkenga Here Tikanga Mahi

PSA policy

Approved by executive board June 2010

Business owner: Legal / HR

PSA complaints policy

PSA COMPLAINTS POLICY

Status

This policy was formally adopted by the PSA executive board at its meeting in June 2010. It is made pursuant to rule 40 of the PSA Rules and derives its status from and sits under the purpose and objects set out in part 1 of the PSA Rules.

Addressing complaints with the PSA

The PSA will formally investigate any complaint from a member which the Secretariat or President consider warrants investigation. PSA members have a right to expect quality advocacy, timely representation and support and that complaints will be dealt with promptly.

Resolving complaints at the lowest level

In general, members and staff are expected to attempt to resolve any complaints with the PSA at the earliest possible opportunity and at the lowest possible level. This means a member should start by contacting the relevant staff member. The organising centre can provide guidance on the name and contact details of the person responsible for the member to contact. This may include the organiser responsible for the organisation or the Assistant Secretary responsible for the sector.

What constitutes a complaint?

For the purpose of this policy a complaint is a concern a member has which they want considered for formal investigation.

Investigations

If attempts to resolve at the lowest level do not address the complaint to the member's satisfaction, the member may request in writing or email to the relevant PSA official that the matter be formally investigated.

A formal investigation will only occur when the Secretariat or President determines that the problem has not or cannot be resolved at a lower level and that it should be investigated.

Initiation of a complaint

If a complaint is about a PSA staff member or delegate – the complainant should contact the secretariat. [website link to be inserted]

If a complaint is about the PSA secretariat – the complainant should contact the PSA president. [website link to be inserted]

If a complaint is about PSA policy or a decision of the Executive Board, the complainant should contact either the President or Secretariat who will determine where the complaint should be forwarded to.

A member may send a complaint to someone else in the PSA, such as a board member or a delegate. That person will acknowledge receipt of the complaint and then forward it to the secretariat or president as applicable.

The secretariat or president shall determine the appropriate steps to be taken in resolving the complaint. This may include referring the member to another PSA staff member or delegate to attempt to resolve it. If this is not appropriate or does not deliver an outcome, the secretariat or president may determine that a formal investigation take place.

Examples of where formal investigations may be undertaken include:

- An alleged failure by the PSA to follow the PSA Rules or PSA Regulations
- An allegation that the PSA has failed to follow its own processes
- An allegation that a member's reasonable expectations about the conduct of a union official or the PSA has not been met
- An allegation of misconduct by a PSA official.

Criteria for formal investigation

When the secretariat or president determines that there are matters arising which may mean there has been a serious breach of policy, process or rules and this cannot be resolved at a lower level, the complaint will be referred for formal investigation.

The formal investigation process

The complainant will be notified whether a formal investigation will take place and if the complaint leads to an investigation, the complainant can expect a written reply 20 working days after that. Depending on availability of relevant people and the ability to access relevant information, this timeframe may be extended for a specified period. The complainant will be advised if any extension is necessary and the due date.

The investigation may include discussions with the complainant, requests for further information and interviews of the relevant PSA staff and other members.

Outcomes of formal investigations

The complainant will be advised of the outcome of their complaint. This will include advice about whether the complaint has been not upheld or has been fully or partially upheld, to the extent possible given the privacy obligations on the PSA.

The outcome may include:

- A review of PSA processes or procedures, including staff capability and competence
- An apology
- Disciplinary action against a PSA staff member (note that details will not be notified to the member due to privacy obligations)
- Recommendations as to training and development
- Over-turning of a decision of a PSA official
- That no action is warranted
- If the complaint is fully or partially upheld, what is needed to put it right – this may include any remedial action taken with respect to the issue being complained about or changes to systems to ensure no future occurrence.

The outcome of an investigation is final. The PSA will not continue to engage with members when the Secretariat or President determines that the complaint is addressed.

Executive Board oversight

The Executive Board will receive an annual report summarising complaints received and formally investigated over the course of the preceding year. The report will include the nature and outcome of each formal complaint and will outline any issues arising regarding compliance with the policy.