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ROYAL GOVERNMENT OF BHUTAN
MINISTRY OF WORKS & HUMAN SETTLEMENT

"Construction Industry: Solutions through innovation & improved technology"

MoWHS/HRD/2016/

01st March, 2017

Office Order

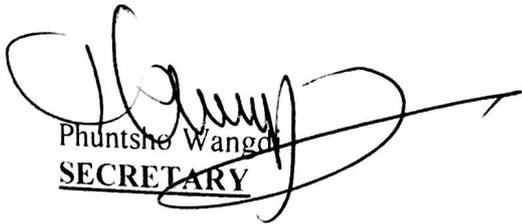
This is to inform all concerned that based on the discussion and endorsement of the 2nd HRC meeting held on the 17th of February, 2017, the Grievance Redressal Committee, MoWHS has now been established comprising of the following members:

Hon'ble Secretary MoWHS	-	Chirman,
Director DoR	-	Member
Director DES	-	Member
Director DHS	-	Member
Director Directorate Services	-	Member
Chief HRO	-	Member Secretary

The Ministry of Works and Human Settlement (MoWHS) adopted the Grievance Redressal Mechanism on the 14th day of the 11th month of Fire Male Monkey Year of the Bhutanese calender corresponding to 11th January 2017.

With the establishment of this Committee, it is hoped, will enable the creation of a harmonious working environment and add to the principles of Good Governance in the ministry.

A copy of the Grievance Redressal Mechanism, 2017 is enclosed for information and reference.


Phuntshe Wangdi
SECRETARY

Copy:

Hon'ble Zhabtog Lyonpo for kind information.
All Members for information.

**Ministry of Works and Human Settlement
Thimphu**

Grievance Redressal Mechanism

January 2017

The Ministry of Works and Human Settlement (MoWHS) adopts the Grievance Redressal Mechanism on 14th day of 11th month of Fire Male Monkey Year of the Bhutanese calendar corresponding to 11th January 2017.

1. Introduction

A grievance is a perception or a discernment on the part of an employee that a decision by the organization, affecting the complainant, has been made in an unjust manner; or that a fellow employee has abused his/her power in violation of the rules, values and norms of organization in a way that negatively impacts a staff member.

Employee grievances arise in all organizations. The challenge is not that grievances should not occur, but rather that when they arise they should be dealt fairly, quickly, with mutual respect and due regard to confidentiality. Grievances can have serious and harmful effect on the management, employees and their relations at work. Therefore, effective redressal of grievances is important for maintaining a harmonious work environment. Grievances that are not addressed can fester, with attendant deterioration of employee morale, eroding organizational trust.

No organization can claim to be accountable, responsible and employee friendly unless it has established an efficient and effective grievance handling and redressal system.

Objective

An effective Grievance Redressal Mechanism in an organization will enable internal good governance by ensuring that employees' problems are addressed quickly and satisfactorily with accountability and transparency. An efficient grievance mechanism ensures that impediments to a healthy work environment are removed and employees' satisfaction maintained.

Its includes measures to:

- i. Provide a proper medium for the employees to express problems and difficulties openly and formally without fear of retribution; and
- ii. Provide a framework for the management to deal with complaints in an efficient and effective manner to ensure a favorable organizational working environment.

An effective Grievance Redressal Mechanism can ensure transparency, which will effectively address and mitigate the following risks:

- i. Avoid miscommunication and misunderstanding among the employees in the organization;
- ii. Avoid negative publicity by an employee against the organization through internet and all forms of media; and
- iii. Avoid expensive and time consuming litigation if the matters are not solved internally through such mechanisms.

2. Scope

Grievances may arise in respect of decisions made by management for example, about performance, promotions, transfer, nominations for training or allocation of responsibilities and resources. Grievances can also arise from improper working conditions such as unfair working standards, unsafe working conditions, unhealthy

interpersonal relationships between staff members and their managers and amongst colleagues, unfair salary decisions, and violation of organizational ethical codes, rules and practices.

3. Grievance Handling Procedure

3.1. General Complaint

3.1.1. Any aggrieved staff member may submit his or her grievance either verbally or in writing to his or her immediate supervisor or Grievance Redressal Committee, hereinafter referred to as GRC.

3.1.2. The grievance in writing shall be submitted in the manner and standard form prescribed in annexure 1 of this grievance redressal mechanism hereinafter referred to as GRM.

3.2. Complaints of sexual harassment

3.2.1. The complaints of sexual harassment shall, considering its nature, be lodged directly to the Secretary, MoWHS, who chairs the GRC.

3.2.2. The GRC shall deal with the complaints of sexual harassment with the greatest of sensitivity and confidentiality.

3.2.3. Investigation of such complaints shall be undertaken directly by the Secretary, MoWHS, exercising due diligence.

3.3. Role of Complainant

3.3.1. The aggrieved staff member shall have responsibility to provide all relevant facts on the issue and to maintain confidentiality during the process of grievance assessment and redressal.

3.3.2. The staff member shall not submit frivolous grievances or make accusations against any colleague or manager with mala fide intention and ill motivation.

4. Grievance review and resolution

The management shall have the primary responsibility to review and satisfactorily resolve any grievances of their staff members.

4.1. Role of the first-in-line manager

4.1.1. The first-in-line manager shall have the responsibility to maintain open lines of trust-based communication with the members of the unit, so that as and when a problem arises, it can be detected early and resolve expeditiously and satisfactorily.

4.1.2. The manager shall create a safe and respectful workplace environment and be sensitive to issues as they arise and intervene preemptively as needed.

4.1.3. Where an employee feels aggrieved, in the first instance, it is expected that he or she shall approach the manager with a verbal complaint. In such cases, the manager shall have the responsibility to make himself or herself available to the employee, giving space for a confidential discussion without defensiveness and in pursuance of an early judgment.

4.1.4. The manager shall, where there is need to obtain and verify the facts, do so after meeting with the aggrieved staff.

4.1.5. The manager shall maintain strict confidentiality and where necessary, seek advice from his or her supervisor or the Human Resource Officer on a confidential basis without revealing the name of the complainant.

4.1.6. Where the complaint is seen to have merit and resolution is possible at the level of the first-in-line manager, he or she shall make quick decision and communicate to the aggrieved employee.

4.1.7. The first-in-line manager shall seek redressal on behalf of the employee and ensure resolution where the resolution at the level of first-in-line manager requires intervention by the next-in-line supervisor.

4.2. Role of the supervising manager

4.2.1. The supervising manager shall also be responsible for maintaining a respectful work environment.

4.2.2. He or she shall make himself or herself available to the first-in-line managers as a coach and guide in evaluating and resolving the employee's grievances.

4.2.3. The supervising manager may, in some instances, make a decision resolving the grievance before it is passed to the GRM or if the aggrieved employee feels that his or her grievance can be solved at the initial stage.

4.2.4. The supervising manager shall be bound by requirement for respectful resolution of complaints and maintaining confidentiality.

5. Complaints that involve management

5.1. Any complaint involving the first-in-line manager shall be directly lodged with the supervising manager by the aggrieved employee.

5.2. Any grievance complaint related to the supervising manager shall be directly lodged with the GRC.

5.3. Any complaint related to a member of the GRC shall be directed to the Zhabtog Lyonpo.

5.4. Where the matter is not satisfactorily resolved at the level of the GRC, it may be referred, at the committee's discretion, to the Zhabtog Lyonpo.

5.5. Any aggrieved employee not satisfied with the decision of the GRC may appeal the decision to the Zhabtog Lyonpo for final decision.

5.6. The decision taken by the Zhabtog Lyonpo in the matter related to the appeal under paragraph (5.4) and (5.5) shall be final.

6. Grievance Redressal Committee

6.1. The GRC shall be chaired by the Secretary, MoWHS, and have four head of departments as members:

- (i) Director, Department of Roads,
- (ii) Director, Department of Engineering Services,

(iii) Director, Department of Human Settlement.

(IV) Director, Directorate Services

- 6.2. The GRC shall be supported by the Chief Human Resource Officer, HRD, MoWHS, as member secretary and as a voting member.
- 6.3. The GRC shall meet monthly or more often as required to review all complaints referred to it by any aggrieved employee or the management.
- 6.4. The GRC shall seek information, that has a bearing on the complaint, and seek input on a confidential basis where necessary to assess the merits of the complaint.
- 6.5. The GRC shall, while making its assessment and decision, keep in mind the needs of the business as well as the requirements of natural justice and the values of the organization.
- 6.6. The GRC may reject a complaint or acknowledge its merit and determine an appropriate organizational response.
- 6.7. In some cases, if the scope of the complaint so warrants, the GRC may recommend punishment as provided within the ambit of the Bhutan Civil Service Rules 2012 (CHAPTER 3: Civil Service Code of Conduct and Ethics & CHAPTER 19: Administrative discipline) on grounds of concerned individuals (employees) failing to abide by the mechanisms.
- 6.8. Violations of the required responsibilities by the Chairperson and the members of the GRC shall be dealt as per BCSR 2012.
- 6.9. The authority for final approval of decision on punishments lies with the Zhabtog Lyonpo after being deliberated, concluded and referred or appealed either by the GRC or the aggrieved employee.
- 6.10. The concerned Director of the Department shall have the responsibility of conveying the decision of the GRC to the staff.
- 6.11. In case of sexual harassment cases, the responsibility to convey the decision lies with the investigating Chairperson, GRC. If a matter is decided by the Zhabtog Lyonpo, the decision will be communicated to the relevant Director for Communication to the staff member.

7. Member Secretary

- 7.1. The member secretary shall schedule GRC meetings and maintain the minutes of the proceedings.
- 7.2. The member secretary shall ensure that the confidentiality of the minutes is maintained.
- 7.3. The member secretary shall prepare a brief annual report summarizing:
 - (i) the statistics of the numbers and types of complaints received;
 - (ii) the demographics of complaints;
 - (iii) whether or not grievances were successfully resolved;
 - (iv) the time taken for the grievance to be settled; and
 - (v) the number of cases referred to the Zhabtog Lyonpo for final decision, either by the GRC or the aggrieved employee.

8. Time frame for grievance handling

8.1. Based on the principle that justice delayed is justice denied, it is important that grievances are addressed and settled as soon as possible. Recommended standards for timely handling of grievances are as shown in the Time Table below,

SN	EVENT IN GRIEVANCE PROCESS	TIME FRAME FOR GRIEVANCE HANDLING
1	Lodging of complaint	Within one calendar month of the decision that is the cause of grievance, or the triggering event. <i>In case of 'exceptional cases' recommended or approved by the GRC, the time frame need not apply.</i>
2	Time for the initial response of the manager with whom the complaint is filed.	Three working days
3	Time for GRC to communicate a decision in case where a reference has been made to the Committee.	Five working days after the Committee meeting at which grievance is considered.
4	Employee to make an appeal to the Zhabtog Lyonpo.	Three days after the GRC's decision. Additional flexibility is possible in case the staff member is out of station on duty or leave.
5	Time for Zhabtog Lyonpo to make the final decision.	Five working days after an appeal has been made.

8.2. The term 'Exceptional cases' shall refer to:

- (i) Sexual harassment of the employees, which for an instance the aggrieved employee finds it hard to lodge the complaint within the stipulated time frame due to social stigma, timidity or fear of retaliation.
- (ii) Grievances related to promotions and training programs. For instance the root of the grievance is detected only after some period of time that would take time and exceed to lodge it within the set time frame.
- (iii) Other assorted harassments or cases which may take time to lodge a complaint within that set time frame due to genuine reason and further recommended by the GRC. The recommendation and approval of such cases shall not constitute less than or equal to two forth (half) of the GRC voting members, based on the nature of their cases.

GRIEVANCE FORM
Ministry of Works and Human Settlement
Thimphu

EPABX: 77190109,321571,327451,326793,327560,327998,328173,322182

Date:

To: (Name) Dept:

Nature of Grievance/ Complaint:

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Therefore, I would like to request a meeting with you onat your earliest convenience (***This meeting shall not be applicable if the grievance is addressed to the Grievance Redressal Committee***)

Signature

Name:

Dept: