

# **AGHALEE VILLAGE HALL DISCIPLINARY POLICY AND PROCEDURE**

## **Purpose and scope**

Aghalee Village Hall's aim is to help and encourage all committee members, employees and volunteers to achieve and maintain standards of conduct, attendance and role performance. This procedure applies to all employees, committee members and volunteers and sets out the action which will be taken when rules and procedures are breached. The aim is to ensure consistent and fair treatment for all.

## **Principles**

Informal action will be considered, where appropriate, to resolve problems.

No disciplinary action will be taken against an employee, committee member or volunteer until the case has been fully investigated. For formal action the employee, committee member or volunteer will be advised of the nature of the complaint against him or her and will be given the opportunity to state his or her case before any decision is made at a disciplinary meeting. Employees, committee members and volunteers will be provided, where appropriate, with written copies of evidence and relevant witness statements in advance of a disciplinary meeting.

At the disciplinary hearing, the employee, committee member or volunteer will have the right to be accompanied by a trade union representative, or colleague. No employee, committee member or volunteer will be dismissed for a first breach of discipline except in the case of gross misconduct, when the penalty will be immediate dismissal. An employee, committee member or volunteer will have the right to appeal against any disciplinary penalty.

The procedure may be implemented at any stage if the employee, committee member or volunteer's alleged misconduct warrants this.

## **The Procedure**

### ***Stage 1 – first written warning***

If conduct or performance is unsatisfactory, the employee, committee members or volunteer will be given a written warning or performance note. Such warnings will be recorded, but disregarded for disciplinary purposes after six months of satisfactory service. The employee, committee member or volunteer will also be informed that a final written warning may be considered if there is no sustained satisfactory improvement or change. (Where the first offence is sufficiently serious, for example because it is having, or is likely to have, a serious harmful effect on the organisation, it may be justifiable to move directly to a final written warning.)

### ***Stage 2 – final written warning***

If the offence is sufficiently serious, or if there is further misconduct or a failure to improve performance during the currency of a prior warning, a final written warning may be given to the employee, committee member or volunteer. This will include the reason for the warning, the improvement required and the timescale. It will also warn that failure to improve may lead to dismissal (or some other action short of dismissal) and will refer to the right of appeal. A copy of this written warning will be kept by on the employee, committee member

or volunteers file but will be disregarded for disciplinary purposes after 12 months subject to achieving and sustaining satisfactory conduct or performance.

### **Gross misconduct**

If, after investigation, it is confirmed that an employee, committee member or volunteer has committed an offence of the following nature (the list is not exhaustive), the normal consequence will be dismissal without notice ( or payment in lieu of notice in the case of an employee):

- theft, fraud or act of dishonesty
- deliberate and serious damage to property
- fighting, physical violence or serious abusive behaviour towards people
- incapacity for work due to being under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs
- failure or refusal to obey a reasonable instruction without good reason
- transmitting confidential information outside the organisation
- serious breach of health and safety obligations
- serious breach of organisation's rules, policies and procedures
- serious misuse of computer, email or internet facilities
- bringing the organisation into disrepute

While the alleged gross misconduct is being investigated, the employee or volunteer may be suspended, during which time he or she will be paid their normal pay rate (if paid). Any decision to dismiss will be taken by the employer only after full investigation. If, on completion of the investigation and the full disciplinary procedure, the organisation is satisfied that gross misconduct has occurred, the result will normally be summary dismissal without notice or payment in lieu of notice.

### **Appeals**

An employee or volunteer who wishes to appeal against any disciplinary decision must do so within five working days of receipt of the letter outlining the grounds for the appeal. The appeal hearing will be chaired by a management committee who was not involved in the original disciplinary hearing. They will review any disciplinary penalty imposed and their decision is final.

## **Grievance Policy and Procedure Guidance Notes**

### **Dealing with grievances informally**

If an employee, committee member or volunteer has a grievance or complaint to do with work or the people they work with, they should, wherever possible, start by talking it over with the Chairman. They may be able to agree a solution informally between themselves.

### **Formal grievance**

If the matter is serious and/or the employee, committee member or volunteer wishes to raise the matter formally, they should set out the grievance in writing, as soon as possible, to the Chairman. The employee, committee member or volunteer should stick to the facts and avoid language that is insulting or abusive. Where the grievance is against the Chairman and the employee, committee member or volunteer feels unable to approach him or her, they should talk to another committee member or volunteer.

### **Grievance hearing**

The Chairman will call the employee, committee member or volunteer to a meeting, normally within five days, to discuss the grievance. The employee, committee member or volunteer has the right to be accompanied by a colleague or trade union representative at this meeting, if this is reasonable. The Chairman may decide to adjourn the meeting for any investigation that may be necessary. After the meeting the Chairman will notify the employee, committee member or volunteer of the decision in writing, without unreasonable delay and, where appropriate, should set out what action the Chairman intends to take to resolve the grievance. The employee, committee member or volunteer will be informed that they can appeal if they are not content with the action taken.

### **Appeal**

Where an employee, committee member or volunteer feels that their grievance has not been satisfactorily resolved, they may appeal. They should outline their grounds for appeal without unreasonable delay and in writing.

Employees, committee members and volunteers will be invited to an appeal meeting, normally within five days, and the appeal will be heard by a member of the Management Committee who has not previously been involved in the case. Employees, committee members or volunteers have the right to be accompanied by a colleague or trade union representative at this meeting if this is a reasonable request.

The outcome of the appeal meeting should be communicated to the employee, committee member or volunteer in writing without unreasonable delay. The appeal decision is final.