



Internal Complaint Policy

The purpose of the “Internal Complaint Policy” is to afford all employees of the Forest Charter School (“School”) the opportunity to seek internal resolution of their work-related concerns. All employees have free access to the Director or Charter Council Board (“Board”) to express their work-related concerns.

Specific complaints of unlawful harassment, discrimination, and retaliation are addressed under the School’s “Title IX Policy Prohibiting Unlawful Harassment, Discrimination, and Retaliation.”

Suggestions for improving the School are always welcome. Employee’s good-faith complaints, questions, and suggestions also are of concern to the School.

Internal Complaints

(Complaints by Employees Against Employees)

This section of the policy is for use when a School employee raises a complaint or concern about a coworker.

If reasonably possible, internal complaints should be resolved at the lowest possible level an including first discussing the concern with the immediate supervisor, following these steps:

- Within a week of the occurrence, bring the situation to the attention of the immediate supervisor, who will then investigate and provide a solution or explanation;
- If the problem persists, the employee may describe it in writing with all known and relevant facts and present it to the Director who will investigate and provide a solution or explanation. Employees are encouraged to bring the matter to the Director as soon as possible if they believe that the immediate supervisor has failed to resolve it; and,
- If the complaint is not resolved or the complaint is about the Director, the complainant may present the problem in writing to the Board Chair who will then confer with the Board and may conduct a fact-finding or authorize a third party investigator on behalf of the Board. The Board Chair or investigator will report their findings to the Board for review and action, if necessary. If an employee needs assistance with the written complaint, contact the Director for help.

This procedure, which is important for both the employee and the School, cannot guarantee that every problem will be resolved to the employee’s satisfaction. However, the School values each employee’s ability to express concerns and the need for resolution, in good faith, without the fear of retaliation or

an adverse consequence to employment.

POLICY FOR COMPLAINTS AGAINST EMPLOYEES

(Complaints by Third Parties Against Employees)

This section of the policy is for use when a non-employee raises a complaint or concern about a School employee.

If complaints cannot be resolved informally, complainants may file a written complaint with the office of the Director or Board Chair (if the complaint concerns the Director) as soon as possible after the events that give rise to the complainant's concerns. The written complaint should set forth in detail the factual basis for the complaint.

In processing the complaint, Director (or designee) shall abide by the following process:

1. The Director or designee shall use their best efforts to talk with the parties identified in the complaint and to ascertain the facts relating to the complaint.
2. In the event that the Director (or designee) finds that a complaint against an employee is valid, the Director (or designee) may take appropriate disciplinary action against the employee. As appropriate, the Director (or designee) may also simply counsel/reprimand employees as to their conduct without initiating formal disciplinary measures.
3. The Director's (or designee's) decision relating to the complaint shall be final unless it is appealed to the Board. The decision of the Board shall be final.

General Requirements

Confidentiality

Complainants will be notified that information obtained from the complainants and thereafter gathered will be maintained in a manner as confidential as possible, but in some circumstances absolute confidentiality cannot be assured.

Non-Retaliation

All complainants will be advised that they will be protected against retaliation as a result of the filing of any complaints or participation in any complaint process.

Resolution

The Board (if a complaint is about the Director) or the Director or designee will investigate complaints appropriately under the circumstances and pursuant to the applicable procedures, and if necessary, take appropriate remedial measures to ensure effective resolution of any complaint.

Whistle Blower Policy

The School requires all directors, officers, employees, and volunteers to observe the highest standard of business and personal ethics in the conduct of their duties and responsibilities. As representatives of the School, employees must practice honesty and integrity in fulfilling responsibilities and comply with all applicable laws and regulations. The purpose of this policy is to create an ethical and open work environment, to ensure that the School has a governance and accountability structure that supports its mission, and to encourage and enable directors, officers, employees, and volunteers of the School to raise serious concerns about the occurrence of illegal or unethical actions within the School before turning to outside parties for resolution.

All directors, officers, employees, and volunteers of the School have a responsibility to report any action or suspected action taken within the School that is illegal, unethical or violates any adopted policy of the School, or local rule or regulation. Anyone reporting a violation must act in good faith, without malice to the School or any individual at the School and have reasonable grounds for believing that the information shared in the report indicates that a violation has occurred. A person who makes a report does not have to prove that a violation has occurred. However, any report which the reporter has made maliciously or any report which the reporter has good reason to believe is false will be viewed as a serious disciplinary offense. No one who in good faith reports a violation, or who, in good faith, cooperates in the investigation of a violation shall suffer harassment, retaliation, or adverse employment action. Further, no one who in good faith discloses, who may disclose, or who the School believes disclosed or may disclose, information regarding alleged violations to a person with authority over the employee or another employee who had responsibility for investigating, discovering or correcting the purported violation shall suffer harassment, retaliation, or adverse employment action. Depending on the nature of the complaint, the complainant will be provided information concerning the applicable policy and procedures to be followed. When appropriate, a written statement of the complaint will be obtained from the complainant.

If the complainant files a written complaint and no other school policy or procedure is applicable, the Director or designee shall abide by the following process:

1. Within ten (10) business days of the receipt of the complaint, the Director or designee shall use their best efforts to talk with the parties identified in the complaint and to ascertain the facts relating to the complaint.
2. After a thorough investigation and in the event that the Director or designee finds that a complaint against an employee is substantiated, the Director or designee may take appropriate disciplinary action against the employee. As appropriate, the Director or designee may also simply counsel/reprimand employees as to their conduct without initiating formal disciplinary measures.
3. The Director, or designee's decision relating to the complaint shall be final unless it is appealed to the Board. The decision of the Board. shall be final.

COMPLAINT FORM

Your Name: _____ Date: _____

Date of Alleged Incident(s): _____

Name of Person(s) you have a complaint against: _____

List any witnesses that were present: _____

Where did the incident(s) occur?

Please describe the events or conduct that are the basis of your complaint by providing as much factual detail as possible (i.e. specific statements; what, if any, physical contact was involved; any verbal statements; what did you do to avoid the situation, etc.) (Attach additional pages, if needed):

I hereby authorize Forest Charter School to disclose the information I have provided as it finds necessary in pursuing its investigation. I hereby certify that the information I have provided in this complaint is true and correct and complete to the best of my knowledge and belief. I further understand providing false information in this regard could result in disciplinary action up to and including termination.

Signature of Complainant Date: _____

Print Name

To be completed by School:

Received by: _____ Date: _____