

RESOLUTION NO. 2018-079

**A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF ROHNERT PARK
RESCINDING RESOLUTION 79-22 AND APPROVING AN EMPLOYEE
COMPLAINT RESOLUTION PROCEDURE**

WHEREAS, on February 13, 1979 the City Council adopted Resolution No. 79-22 approving an Employee Grievance Procedure for the City of Rohnert Park; and

WHEREAS, the City Manager recommends an update of this policy as attached as Exhibit A; and

WHEREAS, the policy will ensure employee complaints are heard and resolved fairly and at the lowest level to ensure uninterrupted city services to the public; and


WHEREAS, the City has engaged the employee bargaining unit representatives in the process of developing said procedure and received no objection; and

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the City Council of the City of Rohnert Park that it does hereby rescind Resolution 79-22 and authorize and approve the updated Employee Complaint Resolution Procedure which is attached hereto as Exhibit "A" and incorporated by this reference.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the City Manager is hereby authorized and directed to execute documents pertaining to same for and on behalf of the City of Rohnert Park.

DULY AND REGULARLY ADOPTED this 12th day of June, 2018.

CITY OF ROHNERT PARK


Pam Stafford, Mayor

ATTEST:


JoAnne M. Buergler, City Clerk

Attachment: Exhibit A

AHANOTU: Aye BELFORTE: Aye MACKENZIE: Aye CALLINAN: Aye STAFFORD: Aye
AYES: (5) NOES: (0) ABSENT: (0) ABSTAIN: (0)

EXHIBIT "A"



**EMPLOYEE COMPLAINT RESOLUTION PROCEDURE
UPDATED JUNE 12, 2018
RESOLUTION No. 2018-079**

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EMPLOYEE COMPLAINT RESOLUTION PROCEDURE

ARTICLE I – GENERAL PROVISIONS

SECTION 1 STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

It is the purpose of this Resolution to ensure:

- a. Employee Complaints are heard and resolved fairly and promptly.
- b. City employees are treated fairly and that their rights are maintained.
- c. Complaints are resolved in an effective and orderly manner to ensure uninterrupted city services to the public.

SECTION 2 DEFINITIONS

As used in this Resolution, the following terms shall have the meanings indicated:

- a. **Appropriate Unit** means a unit of employee classes or positions, established for the purpose of collective representation.
- b. **City** means the City of Rohnert Park.
- c. **Employee** means any regular city employee who holds a regularly authorized position with benefits.
- d. **Complaint** means a good faith complaint or dispute by an employee, group of employees, or a recognized employee organization concerning the interpretation or application of any matter falling within the scope of this complaint procedure.
- e. **Complainant** means the party who has initiated the complaint procedure either informally or formally.
- f. **Immediate Supervisor** means the individual who immediately assigns, reviews, or directs the work of an employee.
- g. **Intermediate Supervisor** means the supervisor next above the immediate supervisor as determined by the department head.
- h. **Recognized Employee Organization** means an employee organization which has been formally acknowledged by the city as a recognized employee organization representing employees in an appropriate unit.
- i. **Working Days** means those days on which the city administrative offices are open for conduct of normal business.

SECTION 3 SCOPE

- a. This complaint resolution procedure pertains to application, interpretation, and noncompliance with memoranda of agreement, council resolutions, city ordinances, and departmental and city rules, regulations, and practices governing wages, seniority, hours, safety, and other terms and conditions of employment which the city has authority to change and for which no other appeals procedure is provided. Issues excluded from the scope of this complaint resolution procedure include those matters which the city has no authority to change and matters for which alternative appeals procedures have been provided, such as claims of discrimination, harassment or retaliation,

performance appraisals, demotions, suspensions, and dismissals. Disputes concerning exclusive city rights with respect to matters of general legislative or managerial policy do not constitute a complaint under this procedure. The nature of these exclusive city rights are described in Section 3.e. below.

- b. A complaint may be initiated by an employee, jointly by a group of employees, or by a recognized employee organization.
- c. Employees who are in units represented by a recognized employee organization may choose to represent themselves or be represented by the recognized employee organization at any stage of this complaint procedure. Employees who are not in a represented unit may choose to represent themselves or be represented by any layperson or recognized employee organization.
- d. No employee or recognized employee organization shall be interfered with, intimidated, restrained, coerced, or discriminated against for exercising these complaint rights.
- e. Nothing in this complaint resolution procedure shall be construed to restrict any legal or inherent exclusive city rights with respect to matters of general legislative or managerial policy, which includes among others: The exclusive right to determine the mission of its constituent departments, commissions and boards; set standards of service; determine the procedure and standards of selection for employment; direct its employees; take disciplinary action; relieve its employees from duty because of lack of work or for other legitimate reasons; maintain the efficiency of governmental operations; determine the methods, means and personnel by which government operations are to be conducted; take all necessary actions to carry out its mission in emergencies; and exercise complete control and discretion over its organization and technology of performing its work.

ARTICLE II – INFORMAL COMPLAINT RESOLUTION PROCEDURE

SECTION 4 GENERAL

- a. It is the mutual responsibility of employees, employee organizations, and management to resolve complaints informally and at the lowest practicable level of management, whenever possible.
- b. Informal procedures must be exhausted prior to initiation of the formal complaint procedure.

SECTION 5 STEP ONE – IMMEDIATE SUPERVISOR

- a. The complainant shall first present the complaint orally to his/her immediate supervisor in an informal meeting requested within ten (10) working days of the occurrence, or of the date the complainant knew, or by reasonable diligence could have known of the act or omission giving rise to the complaint. The supervisor shall meet with complainant within five (5) working days after such request. In the meeting, the complainant shall fully explain the complaint and the solution desired. The supervisor shall present an informal, verbal decision with reasons therefore to the complainant within ten (10) working days after the meeting.
- b. Any complainant whose complaint is not resolved to his/her satisfaction may institute a formal complaint resolution procedure. Such formal procedure shall conform with the steps and provisions prescribed in Articles III and IV.

ARTICLE III – FORMAL COMPLAINT RESOLUTION PROCEDURE

SECTION 6 GENERAL

- a. All formal complaints shall be in writing and submitted in compliance with the time limits stated in the subsequent step of this procedure. The complaint form shall be maintained on the city intranet and shall be readily accessible to all employees and recognized employee organizations.
- b. Each level of management, upon receipt of a formal complaint, shall notify the recognized employee organization (if any) which represents the employee(s) of the unit from which the complaint originates concerning the times and places of all complaint proceedings. The highest level of management involved shall notify the appropriate recognized employee organization(s) in writing prior to implementation of any complaint settlement which affects the rights or conditions of employees they represent.

SECTION 7 STEP TWO – INTERMEDIATE SUPERVISOR

- a. The complainant may appeal the immediate supervisor's decision by completing Section 2 of the complaint form and filing it with the appropriate intermediate supervisor within five (5) working days of the immediate supervisor's informal verbal decision. All formal complaints must be submitted within thirty (30) working days after the occurrence or of the date the complainant knew, or by reasonable diligence could have known of the act or omission giving rise to the complaint. No complaint shall be entertained or processed unless it is submitted at Step Two – Intermediate Supervisor within the thirty (30) working days' time limit. If a complaint is not presented within the time limit set forth above, complainant's rights to this procedure shall be considered waived.
- b. The intermediate supervisor shall, within ten (10) working days, investigate the complaint, discuss the complaint with the complainant and/or representative, render a decision in writing on the complaint form together with the reasons therefore, and return the form to the complainant.

SECTION 8 STEP THREE – DEPARTMENT HEAD

- a. The complainant may appeal the intermediate supervisor's decision by completing Section 3 of the complaint form and filing it with the appropriate department head within five (5) working days from the date of the intermediate supervisor's written decision.
- b. The department head shall, within ten (10) working days, investigate the complaint, discuss the complaint with the complainant and/or representative, render a decision in writing on the complaint form together with the reasons therefore, and return the form to the complainant.

SECTION 9 STEP FOUR – CITY MANAGER

- a. The complainant may appeal the department head's decision by completing Section 4 of the complaint form and filing it with the City Manager's office within five (5) working days from the date of the department head's written decision.
- b. The City Manager or his/her representative shall, within ten (10) working days, investigate the complaint, discuss the complaint with the complainant and/or the

complainant's representative, render a decision in writing on the complaint form together with the reasons therefore, and return the form to the complainant.

SECTION 10 STEP FIVE – COMPLAINT APPEALS PROCESS

- a. The complainant and recognized employee organization have three paths for the final phase of the appeals process. Complainant shall select only one option – either Option A (Complaint Appeals Committee with Layperson), Option B (Complaint Appeals Committee with Arbitrator) or Option C (Arbitrator only). Options B and C require the agreement of the recognized employee organization representing the complainant's bargaining unit. Unrepresented employees, and represented employees without the agreement of the applicable recognized employee organization to use Options B or C must use Option A. These options are mutually exclusive and under no circumstances will more than one option be allowed for one complaint procedure.

OPTION A: COMPLAINT APPEALS COMMITTEE WITH LAYPERSON

- a. The complainant may appeal the City Manager's decision by completing Section 5 of the complaint form and filing it with the Human Resources Department within ten (10) working days from the date of the City Manager's written decision.
- b. Upon receipt of a Step Five Option A appeal, the Human Resources Department shall notify the members of the Complaint Appeals Committee with Layperson. The Complaint Appeals Committee shall within ten (10) working days from receipt of the Section 5 Complaint, schedule the appeal for hearing as soon as practicable and shall forthwith notify the complainant and his/her representative of the time and place at which the appeal will be considered.
- c. The Complaint Appeals Committee shall conduct a hearing, and shall hear all witness, testimony and evidence from both sides and shall render a written decision on the complaint form together with reasons therefore and return the form to the complainant, through the Human Resources Office, within ten (10) working days. A complete tape recording and/or transcript shall be kept for all Complaint Appeals Committee hearings. The cost of any transcript, or transcript of any tape recording, shall be paid for by the requesting party.
- d. A majority decision of the Complaint Appeals Committee shall be final and binding unless such decision binds the city to a financial expenditure which can be authorized only by the City Council. In such case, the City Council may review the record and affirm, reverse, modify, or refer the matter back to the Complaint Appeals Committee for further hearing. Such action shall be taken by the City Council only on a review of the record and a finding that the decision of the Complaint Appeals Committee was not supported by the record.

OPTION B: COMPLAINT APPEALS COMMITTEE WITH ARBITRATOR

- a. The complainant, with the concurrence of the applicable recognized employee organization may appeal the City Manager's decision using Option B by completing Section 5 of the complaint form and filing it with the Human Resources Department within ten (10) working days from the date of the City Manager's written decision.
- b. Upon receipt of a Step Five Option B appeal, the Human Resources Department shall request the complainant and/or his/her recognized employee organization, submit within five (5) working days the names of three (3) impartial arbitrators to serve on the Complaint Appeals Committee. The City

shall submit within the same five (5) working days period, the names of three (3) impartial arbitrators. In the event the complainant and the City are unable to agree on an impartial arbitrator to serve as the third person on the Complaint Appeals Committee, the parties jointly shall immediately request a list of five (5) impartial arbitrators from the State Mediation and Conciliation Service. When such list is received, the parties shall meet within seven (7) working days to select the arbitrator as follows: the parties shall alternately strike the name of one arbitrator from the list until the name of one arbitrator remains. That person shall serve as the arbitrator on the Complaint Appeals Committee. The party to strike the first name shall be determined by a toss of a coin. The Human Resources Department shall then schedule the appeal for hearing at the earliest date possible allowing for the Complaint Appeals Committee's schedule and shall forthwith notify the complainant and his/her representative of the time and place at which the appeal will be considered.

- c. The Complaint Appeals Committee with Arbitrator shall conduct a hearing, and shall hear all witness, testimony and evidence from both sides and shall render a written decision with reasons therefore and return the form to the complainant, through the Human Resources Department, within twenty (20) working days. A complete tape recording and/or transcript shall be kept for all arbitration hearings. The cost of any transcript or transcript of any tape recording shall be paid for by the requesting party.
- d. The fees and expenses of the arbitrator, and a court reporter if mutually agreed upon, shall be shared equally by the complainant's recognized employee organization and the City. Each party however shall bear the cost of its own representation including, but not limited to, preparation and post hearing briefs, if any. The decision of the Complaint Appeals Committee with Arbitrator shall be binding on the City, complainant and all members of the complainant's representative employee organization unless such decision binds the city to a financial expenditure which can be authorized only by the City Council. In such case the City Council may review the record and affirm, reverse, modify, or refer the matter back to the Complaint Appeals Committee with Arbitrator for further hearing. Such action shall be taken by the City Council only on a review of the record and a finding that the decision of the Complaint Appeals Committee with Arbitrator was not supported by the record.

OPTION C: ARBITRATOR

- a. The complainant, with the concurrence of the applicable recognized employee organization may appeal the City Manager's decision using Option C by completing Section 5 of the complaint form and filing it with the Human Resources Department within ten (10) working days from the date of the City Manager's written decision.
- b. Upon receipt of a Step Five Option C appeal, the Human Resources Department shall request the complainant and/or his/her recognized employee organization, submit within five (5) working days the names of three (3) impartial arbitrators. The City shall submit within the same five (5) working days period, the names of three (3) impartial arbitrators. In the event the complainant and the City are unable to agree on an impartial arbitrator, the parties jointly shall immediately request a list of five (5) impartial arbitrators from the State Mediation and Conciliation Service. When such list is received, the parties shall meet within seven (7) working days to select the arbitrator as follows: the parties shall alternately strike the name of one arbitrator from the list until the name of one arbitrator remains. That person shall serve as the arbitrator. The party to strike the first name shall be determined by a toss of a coin. The

Human Resources Department shall then schedule the appeal for hearing at the earliest date possible allowing for the Arbitrator's schedule and shall forthwith notify the complainant and his/her representative of the time and place at which the appeal will be considered.

- c. The Arbitrator shall conduct a hearing, and shall hear all witness, testimony and evidence from both sides and shall render a written decision with reasons therefore and return the form to the complainant, through the Human Resources Department, within twenty (20) working days. A complete tape recording and/or transcript shall be kept for all arbitration hearings. The cost of any transcript or transcript of any tape recording shall be paid for by the requesting party.
- d. The fees and expenses of the Arbitrator, and a court reporter if mutually agreed upon, shall be shared equally by the complainant's representative employee organization and the City. Each party however shall bear the cost of its own representation including, but not limited to, preparation and post hearing briefs, if any. The decision of the Arbitrator shall be binding on the City, complainant and all members of the complainant's recognized employee organization unless such decision binds the city to a financial expenditure which can be authorized only by the City Council. In such case the City Council may review the record and affirm, reverse, modify, or refer the matter back to the Arbitrator for further hearing. Such action shall be taken by the City Council only on a review of the record and a finding that the decision of the Arbitrator was not supported by the record.

ARTICLE IV – RULES OF PROCEDURE

SECTION 11 COMBINING COMPLAINTS

An employee shall include all current complaints in one complaint procedure. To the degree practicable, complaints shall not be duplicated. If several complainants wish to present complaints which are the same or substantially similar, such complaints shall be joined in one proceeding by mutual agreement of the complainants or complainants' representative and the Human Resources Department. Where there is no mutual agreement to join complaints, the same or substantially similar complaints shall be processed sequentially, by appropriate unit, in the order filed and time limitations will be held in abeyance pending complete processing of earlier complaints. In order to avoid inconsistent rulings, decisions in prior complaint appeals may be considered in subsequent appeals to the extent required by the doctrines of collateral estoppel and res judicata or other requirements of law and contract interpretation.

SECTION 12 WAIVING LEVELS OF REVIEW

Any steps in the complaint procedure, other than steps one, two and five, may be waived when the complainant or complainants and all levels of management involved in the steps waived mutually consent to such procedure in writing on the complaint form.

SECTION 13 TIME LIMITATIONS

- a. Time limits established by this procedure, with the exception of the thirty (30) working days' time limit for filing a formal complaint as outline in Section 7a above, may be extended or shortened by mutual agreement in writing by the complainant(s) and the level of management/complaint appeals process person(s) involved in that step.
- b. Failure by a complainant to appeal a decision within the time limits prescribed shall be deemed a resolution of the complaint, unless the complainant is unable

to appeal for cogent reasons. Failure of management to meet with the complainant or to render a decision within the time limits prescribed shall justify appeal to the next step of the complaint procedure.

SECTION 14 TIME OFF

- a. When practicable, proceedings shall be held within the employee's normal working hours. If held at other than the employee's normal working hours, the employee shall be entitled to an equivalent number of hours off on an hour for hour basis.
- b. Reasonable time off from usual duties shall be accorded to employees for the purposes of meeting with employee representatives, preparing and investigating complaints, presenting complaints, serving as a representative of a recognized employee organization at a complaint procedure, or representing a complainant, provided that before leaving his/her usual duties the employee shall obtain permission from the immediate supervisor involved. Such permission shall not be unreasonably withheld.

SECTION 15 PRIVACY

All complaint procedures shall be conducted in closed sessions, except that specified observers may be admitted by mutual agreement of the parties involved.

ARTICLE V – COMPLAINT APPEALS COMMITTEE

SECTION 16 COMPOSITION AND SELECTION

The Complaint Appeals Committee shall consist of three members. With the exception of the layperson or arbitrator, each committee member shall serve for one (1) year and until selection of a successor. Committee members shall be selected as follows:

- a. One city employee selected by recognized employee organizations acting jointly. If the city's recognized employee organizations do not mutually agree on the city employee to be appointed to the Complaint Appeals Committee within five (5) working days of the date the city requests the organizations to select the city employee member of the Committee, the city will propose the names of three employees to serve in this capacity, and each recognized employee organization shall be asked to select the preferred representative within five (5) working days, and the listed employee receiving the most selections will be appointed to the Committee. If none of the recognized employee organizations make a selection within five (5) working days of the city's request, the city shall select one of the listed employees to serve on the Committee; and
- b. One city management member selected by the City Manager; and
- c. 1) One lay chairperson selected by recognized employee organizations and the City Manager acting jointly. A lay chairperson is any individual who is not a professional mediator or arbitrator that the parties can agree upon. For example, Human Resources personnel of another agency such as an employee relations specialist; or
2) One arbitrator selected in accordance with the provisions of Section 10B.

SECTION 17 ALTERNATE MEMBERS

With the exception of the layperson or arbitrator alternates for each of the other two (2) principal Complaint Appeals Committee members shall be selected to serve for the same period as that of their respective principals. Alternate members shall be selected in the same

manner as principals except that no alternate member shall be from the same city department or appropriate unit as his/her respective principal. Alternate members shall serve in the place of their respective principals when the principal is unavailable, when the principal abstains from serving, -or when the principal is from the same city department or appropriate unit in which the complaint originates.

SECTION 18 COMMITTEE PROCEDURE

The Complaint Appeals Committee shall meet on call of its chairperson or of the Human Resources Department. Deliberations of the committee shall be informal and shall provide a full and fair hearing of the complaint and proposed solutions. The city shall provide the committee with suitable facilities and reasonable secretarial support. Each party shall bear its own costs for any expenses involved in calling witnesses or producing desired evidence.

ARTICLE VI – MISCELLANEOUS PROVISIONS

SECTION 19 CONSTRUCTION

This resolution shall be administered and construed as follows:

- a. Nothing in this resolution shall be construed to deny to any person, employee, organization, the city, or any authorized officer, body or other representative of the city, the rights, powers and authority granted by Federal or State law.
- b. This resolution shall be interpreted so as to carry out its purposes as set forth in Article I.

SECTION 20 SEVERABILITY

If any provision of this resolution, or the application of such provision to any person or circumstance, shall be held invalid, the remainder of this resolution or the application of such provision to persons or circumstances other than those as to which it is held invalid, shall not be affected thereby.

Employee Complaint Resolution Procedure Timeline v4

		Working Days
	Act or Omission	X date
Step One	Informal Procedure - Request meeting with immediate supervisor	X + 10 days
	Informal meeting	5 days
	Immediate Supervisor decision	10 days
Step Two	Formal Procedure - Appeal to Intermediate Supervisor	5 days (max. is X + 30)
	Intermediate Supervisor decision	10 days
Step Three	Appeal to Department Head	5 days
	Department Head decision	10 days
Step Four	Appeal to City Manager	5 days
	City Manager (CM) decision	10 days
Step Five	Appeal CM decision to Complaint Appeals Committee (CAC)	10 days
	OPT A: CAC - Layperson Hearing Scheduled	10 days
	OPT A: CAC - Layperson Hearing	As soon as practical
	OPT A: CAC - Layperson Decision	10 days
	OR	
	OPT B: CAC - Arbitrator (Names submission)	5 days
	OPT B: CAC - Arbitrator (No agreement - request list from SMCS)	Immediately
	OPT B: CAC - Arbitrator (Selection Meeting- receipt of SMCS names)	7 days
	OPT B: CAC - Arbitrator (Hearing)	As soon as practical
	OPT B: CAC - Arbitrator (Decision)	20 days
	OR	
	OPT C: Arbitrator (Names submission)	5 days
	OPT C: Arbitrator (No agreement - request list from SMCS)	Immediately
	OPT C: Arbitrator (Selection Meeting- receipt of SMCS names)	7 days
	OPT C: Arbitrator (Hearing)	As soon as practical
	OPT C: Arbitrator (Decision)	20 days

Submit by Email

Print Form

CITY OF ROHNERT PARK FORMAL EMPLOYEE COMPLAINT FORM SECTION 1 –
ADMINISTRATIVE

1. Name(s) of complainant(s): _____

2. Complainant job title(s): _____

3. City Department(s): _____

4. Statement of complaint(s): (Provide a clear statement of the nature of the complaint(s); cite any applicable ordinance, resolution, rule, regulation, or memorandum of agreement; and give the date(s) of event(s) giving rise to this (these) complaint(s).)

5. Solution sought: (Describe the action(s) you recommend to resolve this complaint.)

6. Informal procedure: (Provide the name(s) and job title(s) of the immediate supervisor(s) you met with to discuss this complaint and the date(s) of their decision concerning it.)

7. Employee organization(s): (Provide the name(s), if any, of employee organization(s) representing employees in the work unit(s) in which this complaint arose.)

8. Representation at proceedings. Until I (We) revoke this decision, I (we) will be represented in all complaint proceedings by: (Provide name, and if other than a complainant, include the representative's business title, address, and telephone number.)

9. Signature(s) of complainant(s): _____
Date: _____

SECTION 2 – APPEAL TO INTERMEDIATE SUPERVISOR (STEP 2)

10. Filed with intermediate supervisor: _____
Date Received By

11. Inappropriate level: No Intermediate Supervisor _____

Waived: _____
Date Signature of complainant(s)

Signature of Intermediate Supervisor

12. Intermediate Supervisor's decision and reasons:

13. Notification: (Returned to complainant(s) and employee organization(s) notified.)

Date Signature Intermediate Supervisor

SECTION 3 – APPEAL TO DEPARTMENT HEAD (STEP 3)

14. Filed with Department Head: _____
Date Received By

15. Inappropriate level: Waived: _____
Date Signatures complainant(s)

Signature of Department Head

16. Complainant(s)'s comments on last decision:

17. Department Head's decision and reasons:

18. Notification: (Returned to complainant(s) and employee organization(s) notified.)

Date Signature of Department Head

SECTION 4 – APPEAL TO CITY MANAGER (STEP 4)

19. Filed with the City Manager: _____

Date Received By

20. Inappropriate level: Waived: _____

Date Signatures complainant(s)

Signature of City Manager

21. Complainant(s)'s comments on last decision:

22. City Manager's decision and reasons:

23. Notification: (Returned to complainant(s) and employee organization(s) notified.)

Date

Signature of the City Manager

SECTION 5 – APPEAL TO COMPLAINT APPEALS COMMITTEE (STEP 5)

Select one of the following options:

____ Option A: Layperson Committee; OR

____ Option B: Arbitrator Committee; OR

____ Option C: Arbitrator Only

24. Filed with the Personnel Office:

Date

Received By

25. Complainant(s)'s comments on last decision:

26. Complaint Appeals Committee's or Arbitrator's decision and reasons:

27. Case to be reviewed by Council: YES _____ NO _____

Date

Personnel Office

28. Notification: (Returned to complainant(s) and employee organization(s) notified.)

Date

Personnel Office Signature

29. City Council review comments and reasons:

30. Notification: (Returned to complainant(s) and employee organization(s) notified.)

Date

Personnel Office Signature

COMPLAINT FORM CONTINUATION SHEET

Space for cases referred back to the Complaint Appeals Committee by the City Council and additional space for continuation of comments on previous pages. Use item number to key comments.

[illegible]