



**INTERNATIONAL  
ATOMIC ENERGY AGENCY**

**Secretariat**

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**INFORMAL GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE - NOMINATION OF  
MEDIATORS/COMPLAINTS OFFICERS**

Notice to the Staff

Staff members were informed, in SEC/NOT/1524, of the Director General's approval of an informal grievance procedure designed to investigate - at the request of the staff member - alleged unfair or discriminatory treatment, provide assistance and resolve problems on an informal and confidential basis.

The Director General has nominated the following staff members to serve as Mediators/Complaints Officers for two years, beginning on 1 December 1994:

	Extension	Room No.
Mr. R. Hooper	1808	A-1964
Mr. E. Nwogugu	1514	A-2753
Ms. E. Swaton	6072	B-0853
Ms. G. Weiss	1027	A-2862
Ms. M. Zednik	2302	B-1131

The Director General has also approved the guidelines set out in the Annex to assist Mediators/Complaints Officers in carrying out their function.

**Informal Grievance Procedure -**  
**Guidelines for Mediators/Complaints Officers**

**Mandate**

1. The mandate of a Mediator/Complaints Officer is to investigate alleged unfair or discriminatory treatment, upon request of the staff member concerned, provide advice and resolve problems on an informal and confidential basis.
2. The goal of a mediator's intervention is to resolve misunderstandings between the staff member making the complaint and the person against whom the complaint is made. The mediator shall attempt through discussion to bring about an agreement between the parties.

**General Guidelines**

3. A mediator must have good knowledge of:
  - a) the Staff Regulations and Rules, and the Collection of Personnel Practices;
  - b) the general standards of conduct expected of Agency staff members, as set forth in AM.II/17;
  - c) the Agency's policy on sexual harassment and discriminatory treatment (SEC/NOT/1524); and
  - d) awareness of:
    - types of conduct which constitute unfair, unjust or discriminatory treatment;
    - the fact that discriminatory behaviour (sexual harassment is a form of sexual discrimination) creates a hostile work environment, and in some cases, constitutes abuse of a position of power;
    - the need for all staff members to avoid the use of derogatory or offensive terms or materials or inappropriate requests or suggestions relating to race, religion, gender, ethnic origin, nationality, age, sexual preference or disability status, and discriminatory actions based on those grounds.
4. A mediator must have excellent communication, interviewing, listening and probing skills, and must maintain confidentiality.
5. All mediators should receive appropriate training.

Complaints Handling Procedure

6. A mediator shall carry out his/her task in accordance with the basic provisions set out in Annex II to SEC/NOT/1524:

- a) A mediator shall examine all pertinent aspects of a complaint reported to him/her, and advise the staff member concerned in such a way as to solve problems informally. Following an initial meeting between the staff member and the mediator, the mediator will normally find it necessary to speak with other parties. The mediator shall therefore have the right to meet with other staff members and supervisors involved at all levels, in an effort to clarify facts or foster an amicable settlement of a dispute. The mediator shall attempt to bring about an agreement between the parties through discussion. The mediator shall not have access to staff members' personnel files unless the individual concerned authorized such access.
- b) The mediation process does not suspend the formal procedures applicable to the grievances (or complaints) made. To avoid parallel procedures, however, the prescribed time limits for submission of formal appeals shall commence after completion of the mediation process should the latter have started within that period.
- c) All attempts will be made to come to an early positive solution. Mediation should be completed within 25 days. If, therefore, a solution satisfactory to the complaining staff member has not been found within 25 days following the beginning of mediation, the staff member shall be advised on the mechanisms of the Agency's review and appeals procedures.
- d) The work of the mediator shall be strictly confidential. A brief record of mediations and their results shall be maintained by the mediator for the duration of his/her mandate and subsequently destroyed.
- e) The names of the mediators should be listed in the Agency's telephone book and information about the service provided in the induction course for new staff members.

Tenure of appointment

7. A mediator is appointed for a period of two years, subject to renewal.

Review

8. The Informal Grievance Procedure, including the above guidelines for mediators, will be reviewed after the initial two years of its implementation with a view to making necessary improvements based on the experience gained.