**GRIEVANCE PROCEDURES**

**Southern Arizona VA Health Care System**

**Psychology Internship Program**

**INTERN GRIEVANCE AND COMPLAINT PROCEDURES**

We believe that most problems are best resolved through face-to-face interaction between intern and supervisor (or other staff), as part of the on-going working relationship.  Interns are encouraged to first discuss any problems or concerns with their direct supervisor.  In turn, supervisors are expected to be receptive to complaints, attempt to develop a solution with the intern, and to seek appropriate consultation. If intern-staff discussions do not produce a satisfactory resolution of the concern, a number of additional steps are available to the intern.

Grievances are defined as:

1. Violations of ethical conduct or professional standards.

2. Harassment and/or discrimination.

3. Matters of serious concern that remains unresolved after direct exchange between the intern and involved staff member(s).

*This is an internal process to the psychology training program, as required by the American Psychological Association. As such, it is unrelated to Human Resources and their grievance procedures.*

**1. Informal mediation.** Either party may request the Training Director to act as a mediator, or to help in selecting a mediator who is agreeable to both the intern and the supervisor.  Such mediation may facilitate a satisfactory resolution through continued discussion. Alternatively, mediation may result in recommended changes to the learning environment, or a recommendation that the intern change rotations in order to maximize their learning experience.  Interns may also request a change in rotation assignment.  Changes in rotation assignments must be reviewed and approved by the Training Committee.

**2. Formal grievance.** In the event that informal avenues of resolution are not successful, or in the event of a serious grievance, the intern may initiate a formal grievance process by sending a written request for intervention to the Training Director.  Grievances are to be submitted in writing and must include a statement of the grounds for the grievance, the date(s) of the incident(s) constituting the grounds for the grievance, and the name of the psychologist against whom the grievance is being submitted. The written grievance should include a recommended course of action for resolution of the grievance. The written grievance shall be submitted to the Director of Psychology Training or, if that individual is the object of the grievance, to the Lead Psychologist. Of note, the intern will be removed from supervision with the supervisory psychologist, whom the grievance is against, while this process is undertaken.

1. The Training Director will notify the Lead Psychologist of the grievance and call a meeting of the Training Committee to review the complaint.  The intern and supervisor will be notified of the date that such a review is occurring, and given an opportunity to provide the Committee with any information regarding the grievance
2. Based upon a review of the grievance, and any relevant information, the Training Committee will determine the course of action that best promotes the intern's training experience.  This may include recommended changes within the placement itself, a change in supervisory assignment, or a change in rotation placement.
3. The intern will be informed in writing of the Training Committee's decision, and asked to indicate whether they accept or dispute the decision.  If the intern accepts the decision, the recommendations will be implemented.  If the intern disagrees with the decision, they may appeal to the Lead Psychologist. The Lead Psychologist will render the appeal decision, which will be communicated to all involved parties, and to the Training Committee.
4. In the event that the grievance involves any member of the Training Committee (including the Training Director), that member will excuse himself or herself from serving on the Training Committee due to a conflict of interest.  A grievance regarding the Training Director may be submitted directly to the Lead Psychologist for review and resolution.
5. Any findings resulting from a review of an intern grievance that involve unethical, inappropriate or unlawful staff behavior will be submitted to the Lead Psychologist for appropriate personnel action.
6. These procedures are not intended to prevent an intern from pursuing a grievance under any other mechanisms available to VA employees, including EEO, or under the mechanisms of any relevant professional organization, including APA or APPIC. Interns are also advised that they may pursue any complaint regarding unethical or unlawful conduct on the part of psychologists licensed in Arizona by contacting the office of the Board of Psychology.   In order to ensure that negative repercussions do not accrue to an aggrieved intern, an EEO counselor will be selected to monitor the fairness with which the intern is treated throughout the remainder of the internship year, should this additional process become necessary. The counselor will have the responsibility and authority to raise issues of inequity and unfair treatment with the Director of Psychology Training and to seek to have the unfair or inequitable practices halted and redressed.
7. The policy stated herein applies only to grievances filed against staff of the Psychology Internship program. Grievances against other employees of SAVAHCS are to be filed according to the Equal Employment Opportunity Committee grievance procedures applicable to this medical center. Grievances shall be initiated by the intern within the internship year, which commences on the day that the intern is officially processed in as an employee of SAVAHCS and continues for 52 weeks following that date or until the intern is officially no longer an employee of SAVAHCS.