



SAINT LOUIS  
UNIVERSITY

# Saint Louis University

## STAFF PEER REVIEW POLICY

**Procedure Number:**

**Version Number:** 3

**Classification:**

**Effective Date:** 5/01/2010

**Responsible University Office:** Vice President Human Resources

### 1.0 INTRODUCTION

In addition to the Staff Grievance policy, the University has established a peer review hearing process to facilitate the fair and efficient resolution of those disputes that have a serious adverse impact on the employment relationship.

### 2.0 PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to provide procedures for reviewing a suspension, disciplinary demotion, or discharge of an employee when questions arise as to fairness or adherence to University policy.

A student, faculty, or staff member who retaliates in any way against an individual who has brought a complaint pursuant to this policy or who has participated in good faith in preparing, presenting or investigating a complaint, is subject to disciplinary action, up to and including discharge.

### 3.0 PERSONNEL AFFECTED

This policy applies to all staff employees who have completed their orientation period with the exception of employees in a collective bargaining unit or employees of the Madrid Campus. Additionally, employees who resign from their employment are excluded from this policy.

Any staff member who believes that any action was the result of unlawful discrimination, harassment, or retaliation, may consult with the University's director of diversity and affirmative action regarding filing a complaint under the University's Equal Employment Opportunities policy, even if the staff member is in their orientation period.

### 4.0 DEFINITIONS

Not applicable

## 5.0 POLICY

Formal corrective action involving a suspension, disciplinary demotion, or discharge may be appealed pursuant to the process outlined below. Failure of the employee to submit the appeal in a timely manner shall preclude further review of the appeal.

## 6.0 RESPONSIBILITIES

**Director of Diversity and Affirmative Action:** The director may, at his or her discretion, submit any complaint involving a violation of the University's Equal Employment Opportunities or Harassment policies for processing by a peer review panel as provided under this policy.

**University Officials:** Supervisors are responsible for responding to complainants in a timely manner. The Human Resources' director of client and consulting services is responsible for effective administration of the peer review hearing procedures.

## 7.0 PROCEDURES

Should an employee feel, after oral discussion with the immediate supervisor, that a suspension or discharge is unfair or inconsistent with applicable University policies, the employee may, within three (3) working days of the date that he or she receives notice of the action, present a written complaint containing the facts in writing to the department head responsible for the unit. It is the responsibility of the department head to conduct a fact-finding conference with the employee within five (5) working days from the date of receipt of the written complaint letter. The department head will have five (5) additional working days to render a written decision to the employee. If additional time is needed to gather facts and/or relevant personnel for the conference are unavailable, the conference may be delayed. If the conference is delayed, the department head must notify the employee in writing.

**7.1** If the employee is not satisfied with the decision of the department head and warrants further review, the employee may submit the complaint in writing within five (5) working days to the appropriate senior human resources consultant. All letters and documents sent or received by the complainant and a summary of all previous steps taken must accompany the complainant letter. Upon receipt of the employee's complaint, the appropriate senior human resources consultant will be responsible for arranging the formation of a Peer Review Panel. The appropriate senior human resources consultant will have ten (10) working days from the date of receipt of the complaint letter to convene and instruct the panel. If the panel cannot be set up during this time frame because relevant personnel are unavailable, the complainant will be notified in writing that the hearing will be scheduled as soon as possible. The panel will have ten (10) working days to schedule a hearing and make a recommendation. The Peer Review Panel will consist of the following members:

**7.2** Three (3) employees who are members of the Staff Advisory Committee (SAC) elected at random from a list of committee members available in the Human Resources Department by the complainant. The complainant may not select a panel member from his or her department or one who is personally involved in the matter being grieved.

Two (2) members of university management selected at random by the three (3) SAC representatives from a list available in the Human Resources Department.

**7.3** The senior human resources consultant will serve as an ex officio non-voting chair of the panel. The panel will have the responsibility of examining all facts presented in the case. It is the responsibility and charge of each panel member to keep all discussions and matters pertaining to the complaint confidential - to consider the facts, evidence and credibility of testimony in a fair and impartial way - and to ensure that the decision of the panel does not infringe, ignore or usurp the policies or procedures of the University. It is the responsibility of the senior human resource consultant to inform panel members when relevant policies and procedures apply and to provide information on prior interpretations of the policies as needed to facilitate the review.

**7.4** Panel members will have the right to call upon any employee of the University who may wish to volunteer relevant information specific to the complaint. The panel will render its decision by secret ballot following a review of all facts and testimony. The panel will consider the validity and credibility of the evidence presented and issue a ballot of "yes" or "no" on the issue of whether the employee has demonstrated that suspension or discharge was unfair or did not follow University policy. If the majority vote is "yes", the panel will then discuss and decide the appropriateness of the complainant's requested remedies and alternative remedies. The panel will submit its decision and recommendations in writing to the appropriate unit vice president. Within five (5) working days after receiving the panel's written decision, the unit vice president shall notify the Complainant and the appropriate human resources consultant in writing of his or her final decision. The unit vice president will follow the majority decision and recommendations of the panel unless he or she finds that the decision or a particular recommendation is not supported by credible evidence in the record or is inconsistent with University policy.

## 8.0 REFERENCES

[Staff Performance Management Policy](#)

[Equal Employment Opportunity and Affirmative Action Policy](#)

Harassment Policy

Retaliation Policy

## 9.0 APPROVALS

This policy was approved by the Executive Staff, the President's Coordinating Council, the Faculty Senate Executive Committee and the Staff Advisory Committee.

### **This policy was approved by:**

Lawrence Biondi, S.J.

President

Saint Louis University