

Revised: October 3, 2022, August 26, 2026

I. Purpose and Definitions

1. This procedure provides a fair and timely process for employees to raise and resolve workplace grievances.
2. Business Day means a day the College's administrative offices are open, excluding weekends, holidays, and other official closings.
3. Employee means a current full-time, part-time, or temporary employee of Sandhills Community College.
4. Grievance means a good-faith allegation that a written College policy, procedure, or established practice was violated, misinterpreted, or applied to the employee in an arbitrary, inequitable, or unreasonable manner.
5. Grievant means the employee who submits the grievance.
6. Respondent means an employee whose action or decision is identified in the grievance.

II. Scope and Exclusions

1. This procedure applies only to a grievance that personally affects the grievant and is within the College's authority to address.
2. Allegations of unlawful discrimination, harassment, or retaliation shall be addressed under Policy and Procedure 5.17 and are not decided under this procedure.
3. Contract nonrenewal is governed by Policy 5.3, Contractual Relationships. Nonrenewal is not subject to this procedure except as otherwise required by Policy 5.3 or applicable law.
4. Disciplinary action, suspension, at-will separation, and contractual dismissal are governed by Procedure 5.4.6. An employee may use this procedure to allege that the College failed to follow a required procedure, but the grievance does not automatically delay or stay the personnel action and does not create a right to review the merits unless another College policy, the employee's contract, or law provides that right.
5. This procedure does not apply to a reasonable supervisory directive, work assignment, performance judgment, evaluation rating, or reassignment that does not reduce compensation or materially change a contractual term, unless the grievant alleges a violation or inequitable application of a written College policy or procedure.
6. This procedure may not be used to challenge the content of a College policy, seek relief contrary to law or College policy, or pursue a matter assigned to another College complaint, appeal, or review process.

7. Human Resources shall determine the appropriate process when a submission could fall under more than one College policy or procedure. This routing determination does not decide the merits of the matter.

III. General Requirements

1. A formal grievance must be received by Human Resources within fifteen (15) business days after the challenged action or after the employee reasonably should have learned of the action.
2. Human Resources or the President may extend a deadline for good cause. An untimely grievance may be dismissed.
3. Employees are encouraged to raise concerns promptly and participate in the process honestly and cooperatively.
4. No employee shall be subjected to retaliation for making a good-faith grievance, participating in this process, or providing information. Alleged retaliation should be reported promptly to Human Resources.
5. The College will share information only with individuals who have a legitimate need to know or as otherwise required by law.

IV. Informal Resolution

1. Before filing a formal grievance, the employee ordinarily should discuss the concern with the immediate supervisor or next-level supervisor and attempt an informal resolution.
2. The employee may contact Human Resources for assistance with the informal process.
3. Informal resolution is not required when the grievance concerns the employee's supervisor, the employee reasonably fears retaliation, the matter involves a safety or legal concern, or Human Resources determines that an informal discussion would be inappropriate.
4. Participating in informal discussions does not extend the formal filing deadline unless Human Resources confirms an extension in writing.
5. Any informal resolution that changes a material employment term must be authorized and documented as required by applicable College policy.

V. Formal Grievance

1. A formal grievance begins when the employee submits the completed Faculty and Staff Formal Grievance Form to Human Resources in person or through an approved electronic method.
2. The grievance must identify the challenged action, relevant dates, the policy, procedure, or established practice allegedly violated or misapplied, supporting facts and documents,

persons with relevant information, prior informal-resolution efforts, and the specific relief requested.

3. Human Resources shall review the submission for timeliness, completeness, and whether the matter falls within this procedure. Human Resources may request clarification or additional information before accepting the grievance for review.
4. If the grievance is incomplete, the employee ordinarily will be given three (3) business days to provide the requested information. Failure to do so may result in administrative closure.
5. If the grievance is dismissed or routed to another process, Human Resources shall notify the employee in writing and provide the reason.

VI. Review and Written Decision

1. Human Resources shall assign the grievance to the President, an authorized designee, or another appropriate reviewer who was not directly responsible for the challenged action when reasonably practicable.
2. The reviewer may meet separately or jointly with the grievant, respondent, supervisors, and other persons; review relevant records; request written responses; and take other reasonable steps necessary to evaluate the grievance.
3. The grievant and respondent shall have a reasonable opportunity to provide relevant information. The reviewer may exclude information that is repetitive, immaterial, privileged, confidential by law, or unrelated to the grievance.
4. The reviewer ordinarily shall issue a written decision within fifteen (15) business days after receiving a complete grievance. The decision shall identify the issues reviewed, state whether the grievance is sustained in whole or in part or denied, and describe any authorized corrective action.
5. The reviewer may extend the review period when additional time is reasonably necessary and shall notify the parties of the extension.

VII. Request for Presidential Review

1. If the initial written decision was not made by the President, the grievant may request review by the President within five (5) business days after receiving the decision.
2. The request must identify a material procedural error, material information that was unavailable during the initial review, or a conclusion that is clearly inconsistent with the applicable policy, procedure, or information reviewed. Mere disagreement with the outcome is insufficient.
3. The President may decide the matter based on the record, request additional information, or return the matter for further review.

4. The President ordinarily shall issue a written decision within ten (10) business days. The President's decision is final at the College administrative level, subject to any right provided by contract or law.
5. A grievance concerning the President shall be submitted to Human Resources. Human Resources shall arrange an impartial review consistent with applicable College policy and law. The resulting written determination is final at the College administrative level, subject to any right provided by contract or law.

VIII. Records

1. Human Resources shall maintain the grievance, responses, supporting records, and decisions in accordance with applicable personnel-record laws and College procedures.
2. An employee may submit a written response to material placed in the employee's personnel file as permitted by N.C.G.S. § 115D-30.
3. The filing of a knowingly false statement or the intentional misuse of this procedure may be addressed under applicable College procedures. A grievance is not false merely because it is not sustained.

Legal References: N.C.G.S. §§ 115D-20 and 115D-27 through 115D-30; 1C SBCCC 200.94.