



GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE

Did You Know as a union member you are protected from the whims of your employer? In a non-union environment employees can be fired for small indiscretions, or even falsely accused of an act they did not do.

As a union member you are protected by a Grievance Procedure. The grievance procedure is used to resolve any dispute arising between the employer and the union member relating to interpretation, application, or claimed violation of any provision of your contract. The majority of union contracts provide for these procedures. Steps of a grievance procedure are very similar but do differ in small ways from contract to contract.

An example of a grievance process, for instance, could be three steps. The lowest level of the grievance process is often informal. You and/or your Steward would bring your concern to the attention of your immediate supervisor in order to discuss the claim with the object of resolving the matter informally. It is always favorable to try to resolve disagreements at the lowest possible level.



If the outcome of this informal meeting is not satisfactory, you may, through CWA, file a written appeal to your employer, directly to the President, or his or her designee. At this Step a formal meeting will be held with you, your Steward, and a representative from management.

Depending on your individual contract, you may be able to appeal negative decisions to additional steps. However, the last step in all grievance procedures is binding arbitration. If the decisions at the lower levels of the process do not resolve your concern CWA may appeal your grievance to Arbitration. Arbitration is a lengthy and costly endeavor for both the employer and the union. CWA National will make the determination if a grievance goes forward to arbitration. Grievances may be arbitrated if the union feels strongly that they will have a clear win, or if it is for a cause that they want to have on the record. At an arbitration hearing an 'arbitrator' officiates the hearing much like a judge rules over a trial. A decision at arbitration is final and binding.

It would be a good idea to familiarize yourself with your contractual grievance process. Below is the article and page number in your individual contract that describes the grievance procedure that was negotiated between CWA and your Employer.

- ◇ **NYSUT/CWA Contract – Article III Grievance Procedure (page 3)**
- ◇ **UUP/CWA Contract – Article 9 Grievances (page 4)**
- ◇ **NYSNA/CWA Contract – Section 11 Grievance Adjustment (page 29)**

If you believe that any provision of your contract is not being properly applied, you should contact your Steward. They may be able to file a grievance in your name.