

RULE 20

PROBLEM SOLVING PROCEDURE

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RULE 20 - PROBLEM SOLVING PROCEDURE

20.1 Purpose

To provide employees and management with an effective procedure whereby job-related problems may be freely discussed between the employee and management in a fair, equitable and timely manner. The Problem Solving Procedure focuses on improving employee relations between the employee and management.

20.2 General:

The Problem Solving Procedure is available for all City employees (permanent, probationary, part-time and temporary) in order to resolve job-related problems.

A problem or disagreement of a permanent, full-time employee regarding the interpretation or application of the Personnel Rules and Regulations is exempt from the Problem Solving Procedure and should be addressed under the Employee Grievance Procedure.

The following areas are excluded from consideration under the Problem Solving Procedure: sexual harassment (see Rule 2.18), discrimination (see Rule 2.19), demotion, suspension, dismissal, layoff (general employees see Rule 7.21 and Police Uniform Services see Rule 7.22), performance evaluation (see Rule 13) and the establishment and approval of levels of compensation.

20.3 Procedure:

A. Problem Solving Procedure:

(1) Chain of Command:

The chain of command begins with an employee's immediate supervisor and progresses to the Department Head. Except as provided in Rule 20.3 B Policy Changes herein, an employee with a job-related problem shall present the problem orally or in writing through the chain of command in sequence until he/she feels that the problem has been satisfactorily resolved. Employees must use the chain of command as the primary method of addressing and resolving job-related problems.

(2) Open Door:

Supervisors in the chain of command shall maintain an open-door policy. This policy provides an employee the opportunity to resolve a job-related problem or interpretation of policy, directly with the level of management best able to resolve the concern. If the employee is unable to discuss a job-related problem with his or her immediate supervisor because the problem involves the immediate supervisor, then the employee should discuss the matter with the person next in line in the chain of command.

(3) Department's Responsibility:

The supervisor within seven (7) working days after being advised of a problem by an employee shall give the employee an answer or proposed resolution of the problem in writing. The supervisor's answer shall clearly state his/her decision or proposed resolution with reasons for the decision.

B. Policy Changes:

When the problem involves the interpretation of policy, employees are encouraged to seek a resolution through the chain of command. If the policy question involves multiple departments, the Department Head will address the issue(s) directly with the Head(s) of the other department(s), a member of the Human Resources staff or another appropriate management individual.

A. City Manager or City Auditor and Clerk for their Respective Employees:

The City Manager or City Auditor and Clerk, for their respective employees, as appropriate shall have the right to extend any time period set forth in Rule 20.