

BALTIMORE DSA GRIEVANCE PROCESS

1. Grievance Procedure

1. Scope

1. As GBDSA has a policy to protect members against harassment based on gender, sexuality, race, age, and other categories, this grievance procedure is intended and designed to address other issues affecting participation in the life of the organization. Such issues may include, but are not limited to, exclusion from committees or working groups without just cause, scheduling meetings or events that lead to de facto exclusion from decision making, and/or other actions that compromise democratic participation of all members.
2. This scope is intentionally vaguer than the harassment policy in order to address as wide a range of concerns as possible.

2. Reporting process

1. Initial complaints: GBDSA encourages its members to resolve disputes informally as quickly as possible. If this proves unsuccessful, a complainant should submit a written grievance to a grievance officer within sixty days of the incident, though the grievance officers may accept a written grievance later if they believe there are extenuating circumstances.
2. Members serving as Harassment Grievance Officers (HGOs) according to the national harassment policy also serve as General Grievance Officers (GGOs) of GBDSA.
3. Upon receipt of a written grievance, the GGO(s) will investigate the grievance and attempt to resolve it through mediation within 14 days, if practical.
4. If mediation fails, the GGO(s) will continue investigation and recommend action to the Steering Committee within the following 30 days, if practical.
5. The Steering Committee will render its decision, including penalties, within the following 30 days.

3. GGO responsibilities. The GGO(s) will:

1. Receive, acknowledge receipt of, and archive complainant reports;
2. Contact the accused to notify them of the accusations, request an opportunity to mediate the dispute, and failing that, request the accused's written response, and archive any written response;
3. If mediation fails, conduct any necessary investigation of the claim; and
4. Present their findings to the Steering Committee with a written report and, if necessary, a recommendation for disciplinary action.
5. GGOs will also compile a yearly report that details:
 1. How many grievances were filed;
 2. How many were successfully mediated;
 3. How many disciplinary actions were taken; and
 4. Any recommended changes for making the reporting system more effective.
 5. This report will not include personally identifying information of any parties in any dispute.

4. Remedies and penalties

1. Standard for Determining if a Report is Credible

1. GBDSA's Steering Committee (excluding any of its members who are party to the case) will find the factual allegation in a report is

"credible" if in the Steering Committee majority's opinion it more likely than not occurred.

2. Remedies and Penalties

1. If the Steering Committee finds the report to be credible, they are authorized to carry out the following remedies and penalties:
 1. A formal discussion between the accused and the Steering Committee to develop a plan to change the aggrieved behavior(s);
 2. Suspension from committee meetings and other chapter organizational events;
 3. Removal from chapter committee(s);
 4. Removal from DSA; and/or
 5. Any and all other relief deemed necessary and just by the Steering Committee.
2. The appropriate form of relief will be determined by, among other things:
 1. The request of the accuser;
 2. The severity of the offense;
 3. The response of the accused; and
 4. The accused's relevant behavioral histories

3. Appeal Process

1. The grievant and the accused each have 30 days to appeal a decision in writing.
2. The appeal shall be directed to the Steering Committee, excluding any Steering Committee members who are party to the case.
3. The Steering Committee shall render its decision on an appeal within 30 days of submission of the appeal.
4. The grounds for appeal are:
 1. Either party believes the behavior was not interpreted properly.
 2. Procedural errors, misconduct, or conflicts of interest affected the fairness of the outcome; and
 3. The remedy or penalty determined by Steering was grossly disproportionate to the violation committed.
4. Retaliation. This policy prohibits retaliation against any member for bringing a complaint pursuant to this policy. This policy also prohibits retaliation against a person who assists someone with a complaint, or participates in any manner in an investigation or resolution of a complaint. Retaliatory behaviors include threats, intimidation, reprisals, and/or adverse actions related to organizing. If any party to the complaint believes there has been retaliation, they may inform the GGO(s) who will determine whether to factor the retaliation into the original complaint, or treat it as a separate incident.

You may obtain a grievance form by writing to <mailto:baltimoredsa.hgo@gmail.com>.
You may also find the form on the Web, to be sent to the above address, at

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