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# **INTERNAL CONFLICT RESOLUTION AND GRIEVANCE DISPUTE PROCEDURE**

## **Community Radio Codes of Practice**

- . Code 1: Our responsibilities in broadcasting to meet our Community interest**
- . Code 2: Complaints**

**Review: October 2020**

# **WYNFM COMMUNITY RADIO INC**

## **INTERNAL CONFLICT RESOLUTION and GRIEVANCE DISPUTE POLICY AND PROCEDURE**

### **INTERNAL CONFLICT RESOLUTION**

#### **BACKGROUND**

People who choose to become involved in community broadcasting share a vision of providing programs designed to meet the diverse needs of our community. Challenges in achieving this united vision are complex and ongoing. And yet, the dedication and commitment necessary to attain their goals can sow seeds for possible discontent and conflict. Demands for versatility, professionalism and co-operation, with limited resources of people and funding, call for proactive as well as reactive conflict resolution skills and procedures.

#### **PURPOSE**

This document sets out WynFm Community Radio Inc policy on internal conflict and grievance dispute resolution and is to be used by all members in the event of internal conflicts.

#### **What is conflict?**

Conflict arises when the different ideas, values, interests, hopes, desires or opinions of individuals are questioned. Questioning can have positive or negative results. It's how we handle these questions that makes the difference. Handled positively, questions can be seen as challenging opportunities for creative solutions to new and existing areas of difficulty. Handled negatively, conflict arises which presents obstacles, reminds us of existing history between the players and causes us to focus on personalities rather than the issue at hand.

#### **What is conflict resolution?**

Conflict resolution is the mechanism we use to consider ways of understanding differences and using that understanding to build better professional and personal relationships. We can use the following four keys that open communication between conflicting parties:

- \* responding not reacting to situations,
- \* identifying conflict clues for early intervention,
- \* turning opponents into conflict resolving partners, and
- \* asking appropriate questions to help people shift their fixed positions.

## **GRIEVANCE DISPUTE RESOLUTION**

WynFm Community Radio Inc adopts the following procedures for grievance dispute resolution, and will follow a 4 step process with the aim of bringing about agreement or settlement of the opposing demands or attitudes.

### **Step 1**

Informal negotiation must occur between the disputants. Approach the person that you have the grievance with as soon as possible. Their responsibility is to acknowledge your concern regardless of whether the issue seems trivial to them, is a difference of opinion, belief, or priority. Set up a mutually suitable time either later that day, or if not possible, then on the very next day that you will both be at the station. These steps allow most grievances to be handled between the parties concerned.

### **Step 2**

When informal negotiations have failed to resolve the conflict, each party is required to present verbally, and in writing, their understanding of the dispute and what has led to it. Management will use conflict resolution techniques to achieve an equitable solution. This will be done by consulting separately with the parties and then in joint discussion to develop a solution that will satisfy all parties.

Persons involved in the dispute resolution must:

- \* deal with issues promptly and fairly,
- \* listen to needs objectively & keep an open mind,
- \* avoid assumptions about motives and attitudes,
- \* develop options everyone owns & agrees will work, and
- \* ensure everyone is committed to agreements.

*(\*\*\* entrusted delegate should take minutes of the meetings, date, and all participants read, amend if wanted, sign and date. Copies to all parties, original in office "confidential" file)*

### **Step 3**

If agreement cannot be reached, a mutually acceptable external facilitator or mediator may be sought to assist.

*(\*\*\* entrusted delegate should take minutes of the meetings, date, and all participants read, amend if wanted, sign and date. Copies to all parties, original in office "confidential" file)*

#### **Step 4**

If, having followed Steps 1-3 of the grievance procedure, one party is still not satisfied, the management reserves the right to make a final decision on the matter, keeping in mind the best interests of the station and volunteers.

#### **SUSPENSION OF A VOLUNTEER**

When evaluating "the actions of a station member it is important to distinguish between media law (a condition of the station's licence), station policy (a formal rule that is understood by all) and informal expectations. Many breaches can occur because station workers are not aware of these rules. Station management must take responsibility for the formal communication of what constitutes unacceptable broadcast content and/or behaviour. This is to be documented.

If the behaviour in question is not serious or is considered accidental, a "three warnings" approach may be taken.

If a program presenter has seriously breached media law or station policy, immediate suspension from broadcast activities may be pursued. All suspensions should be followed up with a letter stating the seriousness of the breach and the processes for appeal. The appeal should be held as soon as practicable. Further training may be required before a suspension is lifted.

#### **TERMINATION OF A VOLUNTEER**

In the case where, having followed conflict resolution and grievance procedures, the management believes that membership termination be pursued, the station's constitution must inform the process.

##### **Appeal process**

In most constitutions, management must inform the party, in writing, of the grounds of membership termination. The member in question may be offered the right to appeal the termination and address station members at a Special General Meeting. If the member elects to appeal the termination, management may be required to organise and hold a Special General Meeting within a certain time period. Members attending such a meeting may be required to vote on the motion to terminate the member. In such cases, the members' decision is final.

**\*\*\*This document has been based on The CBAA Guide to Conflict Resolution developed by the Conflict Resolution Network in consultation with the CBAA.**

## **Documents related to this Policy**

### Community Radio Codes of Practice

- . Code 1: Our responsibilities in broadcasting to meet  
our Community interest
- . Code 2: Complaints

### WynFm Community Radio Inc Constitution

### WynFm Community Radio Inc Policies

- Volunteer Policy
- Membership Policy
- Diversity Policy
- Anti-bullying Policy
- Anti-discrimination Policy
- Health and Safety Policy
- Complaint Policy