

# APGF Grievances Policy

Updated 11 June 2025

## Overview

The Greens are committed to establishing a professional working environment for all involved. The Asia-Pacific Greens Federation (APGF) is committed to addressing and considering grievances and conflicts in a timely manner. We aim to continuously improve our integral processes, and resolutions as key learning and development for our members and the APGF organisation. We will continuously find best ways of dealing with conflicts that are constructive and respectful. From time to time, grievances or conflicts may arise. Members and People have a right to be heard and to be assisted to work towards best resolutions.

Note: 'Members' are APGF Members; and People includes those who are not necessarily APGF Members.

## Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to provide a process to resolve grievances or conflicts as quickly and as simply as possible. The focus is on members/people working together constructively and promptly to:

- Create an environment where grievances and conflicts are identified, heard, and resolved;
- Resolve the issue/s;
- Enable the resolution of grievances and conflicts; and
- Restore and maintain good working relationships.

The policy will apply to all members/people interacting or engaged in APGF business. This includes staff, volunteers, representatives, Office Bearers, and others. Examples of APGF business include: APGF face-to-face and online meetings, events, or any other activity undertaken to progress the work of APGF.

The process outlined in this document is not intended to be a legal process. **APGF and any of its members participating in the conflict resolution process are not to be considered liable for any bad results arising from an investigation.**

APGF Green parties shall maintain effective and efficient grievance policies and procedures; and that should enable APGF Members to effectively manage and deal with internal issues through a fair, efficient and structured process that benefits everyone. in a timely manner.

## **Definitions**

### ***Conflict:***

Conflict may arise between two or more people at any time, when there is disagreement over opinions or behaviour, or when a person is hurt or offended.

Conflicts can vary in intensity and duration, and in some situations can lead to positive outcomes after discussion between the people involved.

### ***Grievances:***

A grievance is any matter that a person might feel is illegal, unfair, unjust, or upsetting; and a grievance may arise from a single act or from ongoing conflict and may relate to:

- a role, job, working conditions, or volunteer conditions;
- interpersonal/team conflict;
- relationships with a supervisor, co-workers, or others in the workplace;
- relationships with elected representatives, staff, those in elected positions in the party, or volunteers; and
- perceived harassment, discrimination or victimisation.

## **Principles**

The following points support the operation of the grievance procedures and apply to all APGF members and/or people involved in a grievance or conflict situation and/ or resolution process.

- Follow duty of care concerning all involved.
- All communications will be dealt with in a confidential and impartial mannerly. by those involved.
- Issues and concerns raised are heard, valued, and discussed with respect.
- If a dispute is not resolved, the person raising the issue has the right to submit a formal complaint.

## **Support Structures: APGF Conciliation Committee**

- The party will select either an independent person to handle the grievance[s], and/or refer the grievance to a committee set up by the party.
- The APGF Conciliation Committee is mandated to manage a grievance procedure (as per the Constitution).
- The Conciliation Committee will be familiar with all processes involved and seek additional information where required.
- The Conciliation Committee aims to: [a] address the concerns raised by independently analysing the overall situation; and [b] help individuals and parties clarify and sort out issues.
- Should APGF Members/People decide to approach the Conciliation Committee, they can:
  - Choose which person on the committee to approach;
  - Talk with the committee member(s) about a situation which is causing stress and concern;
  - Be heard privately and with reassurance of confidentiality;
  - Be treated with respect;
  - Decide if they wish to take the matter further and have the next steps clearly outlined and explained; and
  - Ask the Committee member[s] to support the grievance in the outlined steps required to move forward to address the lodged concerns.

## **Resolving a grievance**

Any Member needing/wishing to undertake a conflict resolution process can choose to resolve it either: [a] Informally; and/or [b] Formally.

## **Informal Conflict Resolution Process:**

The aim of an informal process is to assist with a speedy conflict resolution process to resolve the conflict. Either party may have a support person present during any stage of the informal conflict resolution process.

### **Direct Contact or Negotiation:**

- Firstly, the Conciliation Committee will assist an individual or party complainant to resolve a conflict with the other parties concerned .
- Members/People are encouraged to meet with one another in an informal way to see if they can reach a resolution on the issue. They may both wish to have one other person present for at the meeting or have a member of the Conciliation Committee observing the proceedings.
- If the complainant perceives this process is no longer relevant or suitable they may inform and/or discuss their concerns with the Conciliation Committee member[s].

### **Mediation:**

- In a mediation process, a member of the Culture and Grievances Committee will contact all the parties to a conflict to discuss the issue surrounding the conflict. They will work with all parties to try and come up with a mutually satisfactory solution that suits all involved (a “win-win” solution).

### **The Committee member may take on the role of mediator:**

- For mediation to occur both parties must be willing to resolve the issues between them
- The parties must approach mediation in good faith
- An informal conflict that is not resolved may be lodged as a Formal Grievance by the aggrieved person.

### **Formal Resolution Process:**

#### ***A formal grievance should clearly state:***

- A. Who the grievance/issue refers to (the person/s who has caused the grievance, called the Respondent);
- B. The actions or behaviour of the Respondent/s which caused the grievance; and
- C. Evidence, or description of evidence, that may be used to explain the nature/situation of the grievance.

The person responsible for actioning a complaint is the Conciliation Coordinator. The Conciliation Coordinator may be the person who first receives the grievance, or another person responsible for these matters.

- The Conciliation Coordinator will decide on the best process to use for resolving the formal grievance.
- They will decide on the process after talking to both groups/parties about the process that should be followed to reach a resolution
- During the formal resolution of a grievance, neither party/group is required to be in the room and/or present with the other.
- At the end of the process, the Conciliation Coordinator will write a report outlining the grievance matters of dispute in question. This report may include recommendations and a timeline for addressing the conflict.
- If the Conciliation Coordinator finds and considers the topic of the grievance to be valid then it they may result in the defendant being suspended or expelled. The final report is to be given to both parties.

**Contact people:**

This section is not part of the official Grievances Policy, and the Policy and will be updated when members of the Conciliation Committee change.

***Here are various ways for raising a concern/complaint/grievance:***

- contacting (email/WhatsApp/phone call/other) an individual APGF Conciliation Committee;
- contacting all members of the APGF Conciliation Committee;
- contacting the APGF Secretariat;
- contacting the APGF Executive - Co-Convenors and Deputy Convenor;
- contacting the APGF Directors;
- contacting any other APGF Member; and/or
- contacting any other identified designated supporter.