

FSC Exec Board and Local Presidents --

The FSC Grievance Committee serves as the legal staff of the FSC Exec Board on national issues, provides assistance to Local Lodges in processing grievances, appeals, and arbitration actions, and makes recommendations to the Executive Board as to which cases should or should not be backed through arbitration by the FSC.

Local officials who need assistance on grievances and appeals should work first with their Local President and their Regional Vice-President on cases that they are working on, and they are encouraged to do so early in the process to ensure that the case is adequately prepared from the start (in grievances, it is much easier to do it right the first time, than try to fix it once the grievance has been filed!). Every grievance should be carefully considered, including such issues as:

1. What contract section, law, rule, regulation, or policy has been violated?
2. What objective evidence do you have to sustain your position on the grievance?
3. Are there effective, legal remedies available?
4. How does this issue affect the bargaining unit and the Union?
5. Does your Local have enough money to support arbitration (\$2,500-\$7,000 these days!)?

However, if you need support beyond what your Local and RVP can provide, the FSC Grievance Committee can provide assistance with advice on cases. Additionally, if your Local does not have the funds needed to go to arbitration, you may request assistance from the Forest Service Council to support the arbitration. A request for support must be submitted through the Grievance Committee, who will then make a recommendation to the FSC Executive Board.

To assist the Committee, the attached document includes a list of the information that the Committee needs to adequately provide advice on cases and to make decisions on requests for financial assistance. Please distribute this to your Local officers and stewards and file for future reference.

--Melissa Baumann
Secretary-Treasurer
NFFE-FSC

Requesting Arbitration Assistance from FSC Grievance Committee

Locals who would like advice and assistance from the NFFE Forest Service Council Grievance Committee must make a formal request to the Grievance Committee Chairperson and include the following information. Incomplete requests may result in the Committee denying the request for assistance simply based on lack of adequate information. If you are requesting financial support for the arbitration, the case should be submitted to the Committee no later than 14 days after arbitration is invoked, and it is recommended that you get it in much sooner!

Nature of the request:

1. Brief summary of case, including primary issues and timelines.
2. Nature of your request for assistance (choose one):
 - a. Advice on case
 - b. Technical assistance in presenting the case
 - c. Financial and technical assistance in presenting the case
3. If your Local is requesting financial assistance for arbitration, what are the current financial assets of your Local (include all bank accounts)?

Mandatory documentation:

4. Pre-grievance
5. Management response to pre-grievance (if they provided a written response)
6. Formal Grievance
7. Agency response to formal grievance
8. Any requests for extensions by either party and responses to these requests.

Documentation as applicable and available:

9. Documentation of the original issue which gave rise to the grievance (e.g. disciplinary letter, decision on a leave request, etc.)
10. All documentation used in support of the pre-grievance/grievance
11. All documentation management supplied in response to the pre-grievance/grievance.
12. Requests for information and responses
13. Witness statements
14. Any correspondence or e-mail among union, employee, management outlining the issues and positions taken in the grievance process.

All documentation must be provided *in a single e-mail message* to the FSC Grievance Committee Chairperson. If there is e-mail documentation, it should be copied into a file and attached to the request for assistance. A copy of the request for assistance shall also be provided to the Regional Vice President under whose area of responsibility the Local falls.