

**The University of Tennessee Space Institute**  
**COMPLAINT PROCEDURE**

A complaint is defined as an employee's expression of alleged unfair or inequitable treatment with respect to the application of policies, procedures, and regulations which he/she has been unable to resolve with his/her immediate supervisor. For the purpose of this complaint procedure, an employee is defined as both exempt and non-exempt staff.

The following issues or concerns will not be addressed through the complaint process, as these issues have a defined mechanism to address an employee's concerns. Those not included are: job classification, pay, workers' compensation matters, terminations during the probationary period, terminations accomplished in accordance with the Reduction in Force (RIF) policy, court ordered terminations, terminations for inadequate work performance or gross misconduct, and complaints alleging discrimination (including claims of racial and/or sexual harassment) in work assignments, employment opportunities or conditions of work.

The following are steps employees should follow to file a complaint:

1. Employees are encouraged to attempt to resolve the complaint through administrative channels within the employee's unit, beginning with the immediate supervisor. Human Resources (HR) will provide assistance to the complainant and/or affected unit in an effort to resolve the complaint. Complaints received by HR will be reported to the appropriate administrator(s) who will attempt to resolve the matter by working with HR. Confidentiality will be maintained to the extent possible.
2. If, after discussions with the supervisor, the disposition of the complaint is not acceptable to the complainant, the employee shall complete a complaint form (see attached) and submit it to HR, stating the complaint and the efforts which have been taken to resolve the complaint at the supervisory level. Once the unit head and HR have the employee's complaint, a meeting will be scheduled. The unit head, HR, and the employee will meet to discuss the employee's concern and provide an opportunity for the unit head to become acquainted with the issue. At the meeting, the employee may be accompanied by an Employee Relations representative.

The Department Head/Supervisor will provide a written reply to the complainant within 15 working days, detailing a response to the complaint.

3. Should the solution offered be unacceptable to the employee, he/she may make a final appeal to the UTSI Executive Director. To initiate the final appeal, the employee should submit a written request to HR outlining the issue and the steps taken to resolve the problem.

HR will be responsible for scheduling a meeting between the employee and the UTSI Executive Director. The meeting will consist of the UTSI Executive Director, an HR representative, the complainant, and should the employee request, an Employee Relations representative. During the meeting with the UTSI Executive Director, the employee may present written documentation, witnesses, and other related evidence to support his/her position. In addition, the UTSI Executive Director will also have the right to call witnesses or others who may have knowledge of the situation to present information germane to the situation at hand.

Upon the completion of the meeting, the UTSI Executive Director will have 15 working days to submit the final disposition of the matter.

