



Policies and Procedures on Disciplinary Action in respect of Volunteers

Background

Volunteers are an invaluable resource to 96.5 Inner FM and our primary aim is to encourage and support their contribution to our station. However, it is also recognised that there may be times when a volunteer needs to be counselled, disciplined and perhaps to have the volunteer's work at the station cancelled.

We undertake to handle such situations in a professional manner, ensuring communication between our station and the volunteer is clear, fair, objective and remains within the policy outlined below.

Throughout the process the Committee of Management will reflect on its own operations as well as those of the station and will consider the circumstances, actions and behaviour leading to the situation. The following questions will guide this process:

- Have the roles, values and expectations of the organisation been clearly communicated to the volunteer and subsequently reinforced during prior conversations regarding the volunteer's performance?
- Are there any other factors that may be contributing to the volunteer's poor performance e.g. learning difficulties or language barriers?
- Has the volunteer been reminded of expected codes of conduct and consequences for breaches?
- Has the volunteer received training/mentoring and or coaching to improve performance?
- Has a verbal and written warning been given to the volunteer explaining that any further non-compliance will result in suspension or termination of the volunteering opportunity?
- Did the volunteer have the opportunity to respond to prior verbal and written warnings?

Purpose

This document outlines a policy and procedure for disciplinary measures, including suspension or cancellation of a volunteer's work. For a volunteer who is a presenter, this includes suspending or cancelling the volunteer's permission to present radio programs on the station. It aims to provide a clear and fair structure that is understandable to both those undertaking the measures and volunteers.

The policy includes an appeals mechanism to ensure a 'right of reply' to a volunteer who has been disciplined. This is further complemented by 96.5 Inner FM's grievance and dispute resolution policy and procedure, which may be used in a situation where a volunteer believes they have not been fairly heard or that these procedures have not been adequately followed.

This document does not include the procedure for expulsion of a member from the association, which is laid out in the Rules of Inner North East Community Radio Inc..



Policy and Procedure

1. The procedure for disciplinary action is a three-step process which includes:
 - (a) First formal notice in writing to be followed by compulsory counselling and, if appropriate, retraining and technical assistance;
 - (b) Second formal notice in writing accompanied by a one month suspension of voluntary work (including presenting radio programs on the station) and further counselling, retraining and technical assistance as required; and
 - (c) Notice to the volunteer of cancellation of the volunteer's work at the station. For a presenter this can include the cancellation of the volunteer's permission to present radio programs on the station in accordance with the Presenters Agreement.
2. For issues that are considered minor, a conversation with the volunteer may be appropriate; however this will not be considered part of the formal disciplinary action (although it may be referred to in later action).
3. Written notice will include details of the issue and, where feasible, evidence. In a case where the disciplinary measure has been instigated by a complaint, it may be appropriate to include a copy (with identification removed) or extract of this complaint.
4. Further disciplinary actions, such as a suspension of volunteer duties for a period of time, may also be appropriate. In such cases these actions will be included with a formal notice in writing as set out above.
5. Every effort will be taken to ensure that notice of a disciplinary measure, whether formal or informal, will be given at an appropriate time, eg: not immediately prior to, or during a broadcast.
6. Notice of a disciplinary measure will be given by a designated member of the Committee of Management or the Program Working Group (as appropriate).
7. Volunteers will be provided an appeal against the action to the Committee of Management. This may take the form of a meeting with the Committee of Management and/or a submission in writing to the Committee of Management.
8. The volunteer may bring a representative or a support person to any such meeting.
9. For a presenter, conduct which may lead to disciplinary action includes failing to comply with the Presenters Agreement. However, more generally, such conduct includes, but is not limited to:
 - Poor timekeeping and unreliability.
 - Not following pre-existing station rules and policies.
 - Inappropriate handling or use of station equipment or other property.
 - Rudeness or hostility towards visitors or other members or volunteers.
 - Intoxication through alcohol or other substances while at the station premises.



- Publicly bringing 96.5 Inner FM into disrepute.
10. Some conduct may be tantamount to 'gross misconduct'. In this instance a volunteer may have their volunteer work at the station cancelled without prior warning.
 11. Conduct which may be classed as gross misconduct may include, but is not limited to:
 - Verbal or physical harassment of any other volunteer, member or guest of 96.5 Inner FM, particularly in respect of race, sex or religion.
 - Wilful damage to or theft of property belonging to 96.5 Inner FM or any other volunteer, member or guest of 96.5 Inner FM.
 - Falsifications of any of the organisation records for personal gain.
 - Commercial misrepresentation of 96.5 Inner FM.
 12. In a case of a volunteer whose volunteer work at the station has been cancelled without prior warnings the volunteer will be provided an appeal as outlined in point 7 above.