

Writing Effective Grievances

Writing an effective grievance is the first step to winning and the foundation for your case. Avoid common mistakes with these Teamster Grievance Writing Tips.

Just the facts.

Keep your grievance short, sweet and to the point. Explain the basic problem, indicate which contract or other violations have occurred, and lay out how management needs to fix the problem. Adding your arguments, evidence and justifications reveals your hand to management and allows them to be better prepared to defeat your position. Save your arguments for when you present your grievance to management.

Take 'Em One at a Time.

There may be a lot of problems going on at once. Each grievance should focus on a specific contract violation and what you want done about it. If management is violating the contract in multiple ways, file multiple grievances. But take each issue one at a time.

Use Catch-Phrases to Cover Yourself.

There isn't always time to do a full investigation before you file your grievance. Using flexible language will allow you to avoid getting your grievance tossed out on a technicality. Use "on or about" when referring to the time of the violation; use "and any other articles that apply" when referring to the article violated; use "further facts to be presented" to protect your ability to bring in more evidence; use "made whole in every way" whenever your remedy is monetary.

Tell 'Em What You're After.

The grievance should tell us what happened, but also needs to be clear about what we want management to do about it. This is called the remedy. Don't forget to ask for backpay and benefit contributions where appropriate.

Pay Attention to Deadlines.

Stay on top of the time limits. The easiest and most frustrating way to lose a grievance is for failing to make the deadline for filing or appealing. The grievance section in your contract spells out the steps in your grievance procedure and the deadline for each one.



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