



STEP 1 RESPONDENT

ROLE OF STEP 1 RESPONDENT

- A Step 1 Respondent is an administrator at The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill charged with participating in the Step 1 Mediation with the Grievant. The Respondent is generally the direct supervisor of the Grievant or a second- or third-level supervisor of the Grievant. The Grievance Officer in the Office of Human Resources shall determine the appropriateness of a designated Respondent.
- The purpose of the Step 1 Respondent is to provide relevant information on the issue of the Grievance during Mediation and to negotiate for mutually-acceptable outcomes for the Grievance. The Step 1 Respondent may accept all or some of the desired outcomes of the Initial Grievance Filing, accept all or some of the desired outcomes with modifications, or deny any of the desired outcomes.
- The Step 1 Respondent also may serve as the Step 2 Respondent, but is not required to do so by policy. If not serving as the Step 2 Respondent, the Step 1 Respondent could be called as a Witness for a Step 2 Hearing, if warranted. The Step 1 Respondent may also participate in the Equal Opportunity Informal Inquiry, an Informal Discussion, or other informal dispute resolution processes provided by the University in order to resolve the Grievance.

RESPONSIBILITIES OF STEP 1 RESPONDENT

- **Time Commitment:** From the time the Respondent receives the Initial Grievance Filing, the Respondent should expect to invest as much as 10-15 hours of work time over 4-6 weeks. (Refer to the “Statement on Work Time and Grievance Participation” for additional information.)
- **Deadline:** The Step 1 Mediation must be completed within 35 calendar days of the Grievance Filing. The Respondent must make all reasonable efforts to accommodate the scheduling of the Step 1 Mediation as soon as practicable.
- **Analysis:** The Step 1 Respondent is expected to prepare for Mediation by reviewing the information provided by the Grievant and other relevant parties in order to present sufficient factual information and apply policy properly to the facts while representing department management during the Mediation session.
- **Confidentiality:** Grievances are confidential personnel matters. A Respondent may have access to additional confidential materials that may not be available to the Grievant and/or other parties. The Respondent shall maintain confidentiality and shall not disclose information concerning the case to others, except as allowed by policy or required by law.
- **Grievance Materials:** The Grievance Officer will provide a copy of all materials provided by the Grievant in the Initial Grievance Filing. The Grievance Officer can assist the Step 1 Respondent in determining information that may be appropriate to share with the Grievant in advance of the Step 1 Mediation. After the Chancellor has rendered the Final University Decision, or in the event that the Grievance is otherwise ended without a Chancellor’s decision, any copies of Grievance materials in the Respondent’s possession shall be either destroyed confidentially in office or sent to the Grievance Officer for disposal in accordance with the State’s public records retention policy.
- **Conduct:** The Respondent shall exhibit respectful conduct at all times to all parties involved in the Grievance and encourage mutual respect between parties.
- **Compliance:** Failure to comply with these requirements may result in appropriate administrative action.

RIGHTS OF STEP 1 RESPONDENT

- **Non-Retaliation:** To participate in the Grievance process free from retaliation, coercion or abuse by Grievants, Step 2 Respondent, Panelists, Witnesses, the Office of Human Resources, or any other party.
- **Independent Judgment:** To voice and apply their own sound judgment and understanding in applying relevant policies to the information presented when negotiating outcomes for the Step 1 Mediation.
- **Consultation:** To receive consultation and guidance from the Office of Human Resources and other University officials on Grievance-related processes and decision-making.

If you have any questions, please contact Employee & Management Relations (843-3444).