

Potomac Valley Audubon Society

Grievance Procedure

Proposed Consolidated & Revised Grievance Procedure

Adopted by PVAS Board of Directors March 2026

*Formerly the Nondiscrimination Grievance Procedures (adopted May 2008) and
the Sexual Harassment and Bullying Grievance Procedure (adopted March 2023)*

PVAS is committed to providing a workplace and offering programs that are free from misconduct that includes discrimination, sexual harassment, bullying, and workplace violence. When PVAS determines that an allegation of such behavior is credible, it will take prompt and appropriate corrective action. This policy applies to employees, board members, volunteers, PVAS members, program participants, and contractors.

PVAS Grievance Procedure process is overseen by the Executive Director and/or Vice President, the latter serving as the Grievance Officer. The Grievance Officer will be engaged when the issue cannot be resolved through facilitated resolution by the Executive Director or other parties involved, or if the allegation involves the Executive Director.

Complaints

Complaints should be received in letter format with envelopes marked "Confidential".

Complaints by employees, board members, volunteers, PVAS members, program participants, and contractors should be filed with:

Executive Director
Potomac Valley Audubon Society
PO Box 578
Shepherdstown, WV 25443

If an incident(s) involves claims that are alleged to involve actions of the Executive Director, complaints should be filed with:

Vice President/Grievance Officer
Potomac Valley Audubon Society
PO Box 578
Shepherdstown, WV 25443

Anonymity and Confidentiality

Anonymous complaints are recorded and investigated based on the contents of the complaint. Anonymous complaints are treated with full confidentiality.

Grievance Officer(s)

The person designated to receive complaints under these procedures shall be referred to as the Grievance Officer. The President typically designates the Vice President as the Grievance Officer.

If the designated Grievance Officer is the accused party, the President will designate a different Grievance Officer.

Procedure

Any employee, board member, volunteer, PVAS member, or program participant who believes they have been the target of misconduct is encouraged to inform the offending person orally or in writing that such misconduct is unwelcome and offensive and must stop.

If the misconduct does not stop, or the individual alleging the action(s) does not want to communicate with the offending party, the following procedure shall be followed.

Contents of Complaint

Complaints must be filed in writing with the Grievance Officer and must contain:

1. the name and address of the person making the complaint ("Complainant") (unless anonymous),
2. a brief description of the alleged action(s),
3. the date or dates of the alleged action(s), and
4. the person(s) alleged to have engaged in the action(s).

Deadline for Filing the Complaint

The complaint must be filed with the designated Grievance Officer within 30 days after the complainant becomes aware of the alleged action(s). (Processing of allegations that occurred before these grievance procedures were in place will be considered in accordance with these procedures).

Response

The accused party will be provided with a copy of the complaint and will provide the Grievance Officer with a written response within five days after receiving a copy of the complaint. The Grievance Officer, in consultation with the President, may waive the requirement for a written response if the matter has been informally resolved (see below).

Informal Resolution

The Executive Director or Grievance Officer will make a preliminary investigation of the particulars and shall determine whether the matter may be promptly resolved informally (for example, when the complaint arises from miscommunication between the parties, or when the accused party admits wrongdoing and agrees to take appropriate corrective action). Informal resolution will be attempted as soon as possible and need not wait for the written response of the accused party, unless deemed appropriate by the Executive Director or Grievance Officer.

Investigation

If the matter cannot be resolved informally, the Grievance Officer will proceed with an investigation. The investigation may be informal, but shall be impartial and as thorough as appropriate under the circumstances. The complainant and the accused party shall be given an opportunity to submit evidence relevant to the filed complaint. The Grievance Officer may also

interview persons whom the Grievance Officer believes may have knowledge bearing on the matter and may require the complainant or accused party to provide additional documentation, information, or evidence that the Grievance Officer deems appropriate. The particulars of the investigation, whether discovered through formal or informal proceedings, will be documented in writing.

Determination and Resolution

The Grievance Officer will prepare written findings as to the validity of the complaint and will recommend resolution of the complaint, if any (Recommendation). The Recommendation will then be given to the President, who will make the final decision and communicate the decision to the complainant and the accused party (Determination).

Appeal

Either party may appeal the Determination by filing a notice of appeal (Notice) with the PVAS President. The Notice must be filed within five days after receipt of the determination and must include a copy of the Determination and an explanation of the reason(s) why it is being appealed. Copies of the notice shall be provided by the appealing party to the Grievance Officer. The Grievance Officer will provide a copy of the Notice to the other party. The other party may file a rebuttal statement to the appeal within five days after receipt of the Notice. The PVAS President (or designee) shall review the matter and take any appropriate action, including, but not limited to, modification or reversal of the Determination, or requiring that additional investigation be performed. The PVAS President (or designee) shall provide a written decision to both parties and the Grievance Officer.

Files

All files, written correspondence, evidence, recommendations, and decisions related to complaints are to be marked as "Confidential Information" and maintained in a separate confidential file for the complaint. Access to such confidential files is decided by the Executive Director and PVAS President.