Support Person Protocol Fact Sheet

Purpose

This fact sheet explains the role of a support person during workplace meetings relating to investigations, disciplinary matters, or discussions that may impact an employee's employment. The purpose of allowing a support person is to support procedural fairness and ensure employees feel supported during formal workplace discussions.

What is a Support Person?

A support person is someone chosen by the employee to attend a meeting with them to provide personal support during the discussion.

A support person may be:

- A colleague
- A family member
- A friend
- A union representative
- Another trusted person chosen by the employee

Employees may request a support person for meetings relating to disciplinary matters or where the meeting may have serious consequences for their employment.

Role of a Support Person

The role of a support person is to provide **support and assistance to the employee during the meeting**.

A support person may:

- Provide emotional support during the meeting
- Help the employee feel comfortable participating in the discussion
- Take notes during the meeting
- Request a short break if the employee becomes distressed
- Assist the employee to understand the process or discussion
- A support person may also act as a **witness to the meeting** should clarification be required later regarding what occurred during the discussion.

What a Support Person Cannot Do

A support person is not an advocate and is not expected to speak on behalf of the employee.

A support person must not:

- Answer questions directed to the employee
- Speak on behalf of the employee during the meeting
- Interrupt or disrupt the meeting process
- Attempt to negotiate outcomes
- Behave in a manner that is aggressive, confrontational, or inappropriate

If a support person repeatedly disrupts the meeting, the organisation is within their right to pause the meeting at this time and request that the meeting reconvene at a later date with an alternative support person who will not breach the Investigation process within their identified roll as support person.

Employee Responsibilities

Employees attending a meeting with a support person are responsible for:

- Advising the organisation if they intend to bring a support person
- Ensuring the support person understands their role
- Responding directly to questions during the meeting

The employee remains responsible for participating in the meeting and responding to matters raised.

Employer Responsibilities

The organisation will:

- Provide reasonable notice of meetings where a support person may attend
- Conduct meetings in a respectful and professional manner
- Clearly explain the purpose of the meeting and the role of attendees
- Ensure employees are given the opportunity to respond to concerns raised

Meeting Records

The organisation may take detailed notes during the meeting to ensure an accurate record of discussions. In some circumstances, the organisation may request consent from all parties to record the meeting for transparency and accuracy.

Confidentiality

All participants in the meeting, including the support person, are expected to treat information discussed during the meeting as confidential and not disclose it to other parties unless required to obtain advice or support.

Further Information

If you have questions regarding the role of a support person or the meeting process, please contact Team National prior to the meeting.