Grievance Policy

Purpose of Document

London Leathermen (LLM) acknowledges that there may be occasions for people to raise grievances regarding the behaviour of Club Members or Event Guests. This policy details the process for the investigation and handling of grievances, outcomes, and appeals.

The policy aims to have all grievances resolved at the lowest possible level and, where this cannot be achieved, for the Club to follow an agreed procedure to ensure consistency of approach and enable learning to take place.

Anyone is free to raise grievances without fear of retribution or discrimination, either from those whom they have challenged, or from the Club.

This document serves as a counterpart to our Code of Principles and Values and Three-Strike Policy. **It is recommended that you read the Code before reading this policy.**

Expectations

Complainants are expected to submit a grievance in writing via LLM's Grievance Report Form at the earliest opportunity, describing the alleged issue as fully and as close to the time of incident as possible. Grievances regarding incidents at LLM events must be made within 6 months of the alleged incident.

The official LLM Grievance Report Form is the only official route to file a grievance, and as such, complainants are expected to fill it independently to ensure impartiality.

Organisation of the Grievance Resolution Committee

The LLM Grievance Resolution Committee (GRC) is made of a pool of volunteer Members who do not hold any current committee position at the Club and do not have any active strikes against them. While on this committee, the GRC members will not be able to assume any other role within LLM Leadership.

The pool of GRC Members is elected during a General Meeting by the Club Membership.

Upon formation of the GRC, one member of the pool will volunteer to be its Coordinator, who is the main point of contact for grievances. The Coordinator will handle incoming grievances, and will allocate cases to a random panel of three available members, who will form an Investigation Panel. If a GRC member is involved or is partial to the case, they must decline this invitation.

If any vacancies are present in the GRC, the LLM Committee may recruit volunteers from the full membership to fill these vacancies outside of a General Meeting.

Handling of Grievances

The identity of Complainants and the nature of their Grievances are to remain confidential from the outset. Individuals involved in an investigation should only be supplied with as much information as is absolutely relevant to each individual's role in the process. Every reasonable attempt should be made to respect a Complainant's desire to protect their anonymity, even within the process defined below.

Complete Grievance Report Forms will be received in the GRC coordinator's inbox, which is a unique inbox that only they have access to. Upon receiving a grievance, the GRC coordinator will acknowledge receipt of it in writing as soon as possible and no more than 7 calendar days from the submission.

If the grievance is within the scope of our Code of Principles and Values and it is not possible to resolve it informally, the Investigation Panel will launch an investigation into the grievance.

The GRC will give its decision within 28 days of the initial grievance being made.

Investigation of Grievances

All parties to a grievance are expected to cooperate fully in all stages of the investigation, and any subsequent panel hearing and/or appeal.

Interviews may be conducted with both parties and/or any other relevant persons the Panel deems appropriate. Supplemental evidence, clarifications, accounts/statements, and any other details that may assist the Panel in its investigation process may be asked for during this time, and must be delivered within 7 days of the requested date. Delays in receiving these details may increase the period of the investigation beyond 28 days.

Potential Outcomes

Where a Grievance is upheld and warrants further action, the potential outcomes in order of gravity are as follows:

- Case Dismissal: No further action taken on the Grievance.
- Strike: A strike will be given to the subject of claim and result in the appropriate action as shown in the Three-Strike Policy section of the Code of Principles and Values.

Results of Disciplinary Grievances will be kept confidential and restricted to those parties to the grievance and the GRC members who handled the complaint.

The GRC coordinator will keep track of strikes. If a strike being awarded has led to an individual accruing a total of two or more strikes, event organisers will be informed on a need-to-know basis.

The GRC will inform both complainant and subject of claim of the result. Under certain conditions, an appeal can be made to the GRC decision (See: Appeals). Whether this happens or not, both complainant and subject of claim are expected to accept the decision of the GRC.

Appeals

Should any party to a grievance wish to appeal the GRC's decision, they should do so by writing a letter of appeal to the GRC coordinator. This should be done within 7 days of being notified of the decision.

Letters of appeal must include new supplemental evidence or new information that was not included in the original complaint. Any letter not containing those will be dismissed.

Each decision can only be appealed once per involved party.

A new Investigation Panel will attempt to provide an appropriate response within approximately 14 days from the day the appeal was filed. The decision date is subject to change depending on availability of the panel and acquiring of supplemental evidence and information.

Where an Appeal is upheld and warrants further action, the potential outcomes in order of gravity are as follows:

- Dismissal: No further action taken on the appeal.

- Strike Removal: The strikes associated with the previous grievance will be removed.
- Strike Addition: A strike will be given to the subject of claim and result in the appropriate action as shown in the Three-Strike Policy section of the Code of Principles and Values.

Prevention of abuse of the system

This policy is intended for the protection of Members and Guests and to maintain the Club as a positive space. If the GRC believes the grievances process is being misused or abused by a Member, it has the power to issue Strikes as preventative measures to ensure this stops.

The GRC is encouraged to take action in the following cases:

- Excessive grievances
- Interference to the process of investigation
- Publicly revealing the identity of individuals involved in a complaint, including members of the investigation panel
- Weaponizing public opinion to affect investigation results
- Any other case which the GRC deems as misuse or abuse of the system

The GRC must document specific evidence of system abuse and attempt a mediation with the party it deems to be abusing the process before taking any action against them.