



---

## **UNION GRIEVANCE PROCESS**

Before a grievance is filed, principals should make a sincere attempt to resolve any dispute on an informal basis with the Union/grievant(s).

School-Level Grievance Process  
(grievances filed at the school-level  
requiring a response by principal)

**What to do when you have received a grievance at the school-level in accordance with the bargaining Agreement:** (Per each Union's bargaining agreement, some grievances will be filed at the school-level first and require the principal to have a conference and respond directly to the Union)

1. Contact the field representative who filed the grievance.
  - a. Non-salary-based grievances must be filed within the time-frame listed below of occurrence giving rise to the alleged violation.
    - i. CTU: within 45 school days of the alleged violation occurrence.
    - ii. SEIU, Local 73: within 30 workdays of the alleged violation occurrence.
    - iii. UNITEHERE, Local 1: within 30 workdays of the alleged violation occurrence for every grievance.
    - iv. SEIU Local 1, Firemen and Oilers Division (Lunchroom Managers): within 15 school days of the alleged violation occurrence for every grievance.
    - v. Local 143B (Financial Services): within 45 work days of the alleged violation occurrence for every grievance.
  - b. Salary-based grievances may be filed within 3 calendar years of the alleged violation occurrence (except for UNITEHERE, Local 1, SEIU, Local 1, and Local 143B members).
  - c. Examples of school-level grievances for CTU include, but are not limited to, those based on scheduling or teacher programming, preparation periods, teaching assignments or preferences, and approval/denial of benefit time.
  - d. For Unions other than CTU, grievances are often not filed directly with the principal, as these employee's immediate supervisors or direct manager may be with a different department, but they can be based on the allegations. Examples: NSS, Aramark, or Facilities.
2. Schedule a meeting in collaboration with the field representative within 5 school days of receiving the grievance (for UNITEHERE, Local 1, schedule the meeting within 10 school days).

- a. Your assistant principal should attend only if they have relevant information.
3. Conduct the meeting.
  - a. Allow the Union and grievant to present the issue.
  - b. Listen carefully.
  - c. Ask the Union what is needed to resolve the issue.
  - d. Do not feel compelled to respond orally at the meeting but feel free to ask questions and inquire about a resolution.
4. Within 5 school days from the date of the meeting, submit a written response to the field representative<sup>1</sup>.
  - a. There is no length requirement for the written response.
  - b. Remember to consider whether or not the grievance was timely filed and address the timeliness of the grievance in your response.
  - c. Remember to review the individual Union's bargaining agreement and relevant Article number alleged in the grievance as you are issuing your written response.

**What happens after you issue a written response to a grievance filed at the school level?**

1. Per the applicable bargaining agreement, the Union may appeal the grievance to the Office of Administrative Hearings (OAH) in the Law Department.
  - a. If the Union is satisfied with your response, the grievance may not be appealed to the OAH and the matter will be considered closed.
  - b. If the Union does not receive a timely response from you or does not agree with your response, the Union may file an appeal with the OAH.
2. Upon receipt of an appeal from the Union, the OAH will reach out to you and the Union by email to schedule a mutually-agreeable date and time for a hearing to occur remotely via Google Meet.
  - a. Please respond to the OAH emails in a timely manner.
3. At the hearing, an OAH hearing officer will allow both sides to present their perspective of the issue.
4. After the hearing, the OAH hearing officer will issue a written decision, which will be sent to you and the Union.
5. If the Union does not agree with the OAH's decision, the Union may demand mediation/arbitration on the grievance where a neutral third party (selected by the Union and the Board) will hear the case. If a mediation/arbitration is scheduled on the matter, and your assistance is required, an attorney from the CPS Law Department will contact you at that time.
6. Arbitration decisions are final and binding.

---

<sup>1</sup> Ideally, the written response is on school letterhead, but it can also be done via email to the Union representative with the grievant(s) copied.

3-8 Grievance Process for CTU  
(grievances filed directly with the OAH  
and outside the scope of a principal to  
issue a direct response)

**What to do when a CTU grievance is filed directly with the OAH in accordance with Article 3-8 of the Agreement:** (Per the bargaining Agreement between CTU and the Board, some grievances should be filed directly with the OAH at the 3-8 level based on allegations or subject matter that are based on an action of an authority higher than the principal. These only require the principal to provide a response to the OAH. OAH will review the principal's response along with the grievance and issue a response to the Union directly. Examples of 3-8 grievances include, but are not limited to, those based on REACH evaluations, harassment, or discrimination.

1. Some 3-8 grievances may not be within the direct purview of administration and thus your response will not be required (example: incorrect salary step or lane). However, if the grievance requires a response from you directly, the OAH will contact you via email informing you the Chicago Teachers Union has filed a grievance regarding your school/department/unit. The grievance will be attached and you will be asked to review and respond to it via the OAH's Grievance Response Google Form.
2. Please respond via the Google Form, which will be linked in the email within five (5) business days in order for the OAH to conduct a timely and meaningful investigation into the allegations presented.
3. If you have any questions about the response, or want to provide any additional support documentation, you can contact the assigned hearing officer (they will be identified in the initial email you receive). The assigned hearing officer will contact you directly if any additional information is needed.
4. Once all of the information has been gathered, the OAH will issue a written response to the 3-8 grievance, which will be sent to you and the Union.

**What happens after the OAH issues a written response to a grievance filed in accordance with Article 3-8?**

1. If the Union does not agree with the OAH's initial 3-8 response, the Union may file an appeal with the OAH.
2. Upon receipt of an appeal from the Union, the OAH will reach out to you and the Union by email to schedule a mutually-agreeable date and time for a hearing to occur remotely via Google Meet.
  - a. Please respond to the OAH emails in a timely manner.
3. At the hearing, an OAH hearing officer will allow both sides to present their perspective of the issue.
4. After the hearing, the OAH hearing officer will issue a second written decision, which will be sent to you and the Union (this decision may either uphold the initial 3-8 response, resolve the matter, or overturn the initial 3-8 response and grant further relief).
5. If the Union does not agree with the OAH's appeal decision, the Union may demand mediation/arbitration on the grievance where a neutral third party (selected by the Union and the

Board) will hear the case. If a mediation/arbitration is scheduled on the matter, and your assistance is required, an attorney from the CPS Law Department will contact you at the time.

6. Arbitration decisions are final and binding.

Non School-Level Grievance Process for all  
other Unions

1. For all other non-CTU Unions, (SEIU, Local 73, UniteHere Local 1, SEIU Local 1, or Local 143B), a grievance may be filed directly with the OAH based on the allegations or subject matter being above the authority of a principal or at a later stage of the grievance process outlined in the applicable bargaining agreement.
2. When grievances for each of these Union's are filed with the OAH, no initial response will be required from you via Google Form. Rather, the matter will be scheduled for a hearing. Some of these grievances may not be within the direct purview of administration and thus your attendance or response at the hearing will not be required. However, if your attendance is required, the OAH will reach out to you and the Union by email to schedule a mutually-agreeable date and time for a hearing to occur remotely via Google Meet.
  - a. Please respond to the OAH emails in a timely manner.
3. No written decision will have been issued by the OAH prior to the hearing. At the hearing, an OAH hearing officer will allow both sides to present their perspective of the issue.
4. After the hearing, the OAH hearing officer will issue a written decision, which will be sent to you and the Union.
5. If the Union does not agree with the OAH's decision, the Union may demand mediation/arbitration on the grievance where a neutral third party (selected by the Union and the Board) will hear the case. If a mediation/arbitration is scheduled on the matter, and your assistance is required, an attorney from the CPS Law Department will contact you at the time.
6. Arbitration decisions are final and binding.