



# **Tonto Rim Search and Rescue (TRSAR) Complaint, Grievance and Appeal Policy P.O. Box 357 Pine, AZ. 85544**

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3 Pages

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## **SECTION I. PURPOSE:**

This policy provides a process for members to discuss complaints and/or problems, receive careful consideration and receive a prompt resolution relative to their complaints, grievances, and/or appeals for disciplinary and/or adverse action.

## **SECTION II. POLICY:**

- A. The Tonto Rim Search and Rescue Squad philosophy is the "Open Door Policy". Defined, this concept means, an open and direct working relationship with all members and a team environment with open and honest communication. Complaints and/or grievances can be verbal or written. Appeals for disciplinary and/or adverse action must be in writing. The discussion and handling of complaints and/or grievances can be verbal and/or in writing. The discussion and handling of an appeal for disciplinary and/or adverse action must be in writing.

## **SECTION III. PROCEDURES:**

- A. Members should always first discuss their complaint or grievance with the Commander and/or Vice Commander.
1. If the complaint or grievance is with or about the Commander or Vice Commander, the member may discuss it with another Board member.
  2. If the complaint or grievance is about a safety issue then the member may discuss it with the Safety Officer.
    - a. If the complaint or grievance is about an immediate safety issue, the member should address it with the mission or training safety officer or commander.
  3. No complaints and/or grievances will be presented and/or discussed during any active mission.
    - a. Unless it is an immediate safety issue.
    - b. Complaints and/or grievances can be presented during the debrief.
  4. No complaint and/or grievance can be filed and/or discussed with another agency until the member has exhausted all avenues within the TRSAR squad.

- B. The Commander, Vice Commander or The Board member receiving the complaint or

grievance:

1. Can discuss the issue with the member when it is presented, or
  2. May direct to discuss it at a later time, but no later than five (5) days, or
  3. May request that the complaint and/or grievance be presented in writing.
- C. If directed to present the complaint and/or grievance in writing, and/or the verbal discussion of the complaint and/or grievance does not satisfy the member, the member may follow up with a written complaint and/or grievance to the Board. If the member is appealing disciplinary and/or adverse action against them, they must file the appeal in writing and will follow the following procedures.
1. The written complaint, grievance and/or appeal should be sent to the Commander, Vice Commander or Secretary, by mail or email.
  2. The Complaint, grievance and/or appeal must be presented in writing within ten (10) days of being from the date of occurrence, disciplinary and/or adverse action and/or being directed to present it in writing.
  3. The written complaint, grievance and/or appeal must be specific and include specific details, the event, date, time, members involved, witnesses, situations, circumstances, etc.
- D. Once the Board member receives the written complaint, grievance, and/or appeal they must;
1. Acknowledge receipt, to the member within seventy two (72) hours.
    - a. Notice can be a phone call but it is preferred the notification be an email. Appeal's must be mailed or emailed.
  2. The Board member will mark, date received and date member notified and will provide copies to all board members.
  3. The Board member will coordinate with the other board members to meet, discuss and act on the complaint, grievance or appeal.
    - a. The Board should meet within 15-30 days after receipt of the written complaint and/or grievance or appeal of the board's previous decision on a complaint and/or grievance but no later than the next scheduled board meeting.
    - b. For disciplinary and/or adverse action against a member, the Board must meet within fifteen (15) days.
    - c. A quorum is required, but a full board is preferred.
  4. The board will notify the member of the date, time and location of the meeting to discuss their complaint, grievance and/or appeal.
    - a. The member may request one (1) change to the date and/or time but the change must be approved by the board.
    - b. The member may have another member or witness attend the meeting but they must have direct and/or personal knowledge relating to the event, actions, complaint and/or grievance.
  5. The Commander and/or Vice Commander should chair the meeting but may request with the approval of the Board to have a neutral

- member or person serve as chair or mediator.
6. The Chair or mediator will read the complaint and/or grievance, then:
    - a. Allow the member to make a statement and present evidence or witness., then:
    - b. The board may ask questions of the member and/or witness.
    - c. Once the Chair or mediator feels that the issues have been fully discussed, evidence presented, witness testified, the member had the opportunity to present their case, ask and answer questions and Board members were give the opportunity to ask questions and receive answers, the Chair or mediator may closed the meeting.
  7. When the Chair or mentor closes the meeting.
    - a. The Board may excuse the mentor and/or the witness.
    - b. The Board may excuse the member or request the member stay or wait outside.
  8. The Board will review and discuss all information and data presented at the meeting and render their decision.
    - a. The Board may request another meeting but it must be within ten (10) days of the first (1st) meeting.
      - (1) The Board must notify the member by phone and in writing with an Email of their request for a second (2nd) meeting within twenty (24) hours and provide the date, time and place of the meeting.
    - b. The Board must notify the member of their decision on the complaint, grievance or appeal by mail within five (5) days.
      - (1) The Board decision on appeals for disciplinary and/or adverse action must be written and mailed to the member. (an email can also be sent with the mailed copy)
  9. After the member receives the board's decision on their complaint or grievance they may file an appeal, but the appeal must be in writing within ten (10) days after receipt of the board's decision.
    - a. Members may only file one (1) appeal.
    - b. Procedures for the filing and the handling of an appeal is the same as filing a written complaint and/or grievance.
  10. The decision of the Board on an appeal is final.