



Olympia Beekeepers Association

Grievance Policy and Procedure

Introduction

Olympia Beekeepers Association (OBA) functions to support apiculture and its related environment, which includes other pollinators and general flora and fauna, through education of its members and the broader community. The OBA bylaws and policies are intended to direct and advance those goals cooperatively within the membership and the community.

General Responses to grievances

Through action by OBA's Board of Directors, OBA will consider and respond to any grievance or action in which it appears that OBA's interests are threatened or harmed and to any grievance that claims that OBA's actions threaten or harm an individual or organization.

OBA responses will comply with applicable state and federal laws and regulations, including 501(c)(3) requirements.

In processing grievances OBA will pursue smooth and amicable ongoing operation of the organization.

Preliminary Step

OBA will strive to bring closure to grievances, initially by attempting amicable and informal discussion among the parties involved that may recognize that any of the following may apply:

- 1 Complainants should identify the type of dispute to decide whether it is most appropriate to pursue the complaint through criminal or civil action rather than directly with OBA.
- 2 The complaint does not involve OBA or its members and should be pursued elsewhere.
- 3 OBA's Hold Harmless Policy applies.

If initial discussions do not resolve the matter, these more specific grievance procedural steps apply:

Grievance Procedural Steps



Step 1 The complaint must be submitted to the Board in writing and include specific allegations. If the member in question is a member of the Board, that member shall recuse themselves from the proceedings.

Step 2 The Board will decide what action should be taken. If the Board determines that OBA has no standing in the complaint, or that OBA's interests are not involved, the claimant will be so informed. The Board will then end its involvement in the dispute. Otherwise:

Step 3 The goal of the Board is that all parties involved shall discuss the matter and reach a quick and amicable solution. If no amicable solution can be reached, the Board shall seek to protect OBA's interests by taking the following measures:

The Board will hear in executive session all parties to the complaint, evaluate all evidence, including additional testimony if needed. OBA will seek expert counsel in formulating responses where OBA capabilities are exceeded. By majority vote the Board shall formulate a resolution as outlined below, The Board's resolution is considered final, the matter shall be considered closed, and the record sealed.

Board Level Resolutions

Potential resolutions may include, but are not limited to:

1. The Board may assert applicable Hold Harmless policy and agreements.
2. The Board may conclude that no further action should be taken.
3. If a member is found to have acted against the interests of OBA, the Board may issue a reprimand to that member, demand restoration of damages or remove some or all privileges of membership from the member for some specified time. If total loss of membership by a member (expulsion) is the recommended resolution, that will be referred to a Special Meeting per Article II, Section 4 of OBA's bylaws.
4. Referral of the parties to the dispute to participate in mediation proceedings by the Dispute Resolution Center of Thurston County.
5. Mediation involves each side of the dispute sitting down with impartial persons, the mediators, to attempt to reach a voluntary settlement. Mediation involves no formal court procedures or rules of evidence, and the mediator does not have the power to render a binding decision or force an agreement on the parties. If a written agreement is reached in mediation, the agreement can become a legally enforceable and binding contract.

Note: The parties must agree to share equally in the costs of the mediation. If such agreement to mediate and share costs is not reached, civil recourse may be pursued.