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(a) There shall be five steps in this procedure.

(1) Step one shall be the initiation of a complaint. Grievances must be initiated within 30 days of the alleged complaint or within 30 days after the complaining employee reasonably may be held to have knowledge of the act of which he is complaining. An aggrieved employee and his designated representative may either:

(i) Present his grievance orally to his immediate supervisor for the purpose of informal discussions. If the grievance is unresolved after three days, the employee may appeal to step two, which appeal must be in writing and filed within three days; or

(ii) Present his grievance in writing to his intermediate supervisor for formal consideration. If the grievance is presented to the intermediate supervisor, the intermediate supervisor shall within five days after receipt of the written grievance hold a conference with the aggrieved and/or his designated representative and shall within five days after the conclusion of the conference render his decision in writing to the aggrieved and/or his designated representative. In the event the aggrieved employee is not satisfied with the decision rendered at this step, he and/or his designated representative may appeal in writing to step two within five days.

(2) The grievance appeal shall be presented, in writing, to the program director or his designated representative. Within five days after receipt of the written grievance, the program director or his designated representative shall hold a conference with the aggrieved and/or his designated representative and shall render a written decision within ten days after the conclusion of the conference. In the event an aggrieved is not satisfied with the decision, he and/or his designated representative may appeal in writing to the next step within five days.

(3) The grievance appeal shall be presented, in writing, to the appointing authority, or his designated representative. Within ten days after the receipt of the written grievance appeal the appointing authority or his designated representative shall hold a conference with the aggrieved and/or his designated representative and shall render a written decision to the aggrieved within 15 days after the conclusion of the conference. In the event the aggrieved employee is not satisfied with the decision, he and/or his designated representative may appeal, in writing, to the next step within ten days.

(4) The grievance appeal shall be presented in writing to the Secretary of the Department or his designated representative. Within ten days after the receipt of the written grievance appeal the Secretary or his designated representative,