

Grievance, Complaint, or Gripe?

As a classified employee you have certain rights, but are you aware of what those rights are? Many employees mistakenly confuse a gripe or a complaint with a grievance. This article will attempt to explain the difference.

Grievance

A grievance is a violation of the Collective Bargaining Agreement between CSEA and the District (commonly referred to as “your contract”). If you believe you have a grievance contact your local CSEA leadership or Labor Relations Representative as soon as possible to maintain timelines outlined in the grievance article of your contract.

Complaint

A complaint is not a violation of the contract. Although an employee may believe that they are being treated unfairly, if there is no contractual violation, there is no grievance. A good example would be when a classified employee and another employee do not get along or have an argument. There is no contractual violation so a grievance cannot be filed.

However, many Districts have complaint procedures that allow employees to file a formal complaint regarding another employee, including management and supervisory employees. Check with your local CSEA leadership or Labor Relations Representative to see if this option is available in your District.

Gripe

What is a gripe? Many employees call CSEA regarding what they believe are legitimate grievances when in fact they just have gripe. A gripe is not a contractual violation and may not be a complaint. A gripe is something that you believe may be unfair or unjust but is neither unlawful or a violation of the contract. For example, your new supervisor never smiles or greets you in the morning. While your last supervisor may have been a very warm person who greeted his employees with a smile and a cheery “good morning!” each day, there is nothing legal or contractual that mandates that your new supervisor behave in a similar fashion.

If you have an issue and you aren't sure whether it's a grievance, complaint or gripe contact your local CSEA leadership or Labor Relations Representative.