

STEWARD GUIDE: GRIEVANCE POINTERS
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Q: The use of the internal agency mail system is convenient, but should it be used for grievance appeals?

A: No. The agency mail system can be unreliable, and because there is no receipt, it does not provide the steward with a record of when the grievance was appealed. You may also create a disagreement on when the agency should have date-stamped the appeal as received. Grievance appeals, particularly at Steps 3 and 4, should always be sent by certified mail. Section 25.01 E specifically prohibits utilizing agency systems where different work locations are involved.

Q: I am evaluating a grievance on improper assignments from an overtime roster. What information should I have to document the grievance?

A: First, get a copy of the overtime roster reflecting the exact number of hours worked by all eligible persons and their ranking when the violation occurred and after it occurred.

Second, have a full understanding of the work place practices on how work assignments are made and the classifications of the affected employees.

Lastly, calculate the number of overtime hours worked that are in question and who specifically should have been given the overtime assignments.

*** Don't waive pre-disciplinary hearing**

Be on the look out for agency pre-disciplinary notices offering the employee an opportunity to waive the pre-disciplinary meeting and accept whatever penalty management proposes. Employees should NOT sign off on such waivers. Such notice may be accompanied by a "waiver of right to meeting form which may state that the employee's attendance at a pre-disciplinary meeting is not necessary if the proposed discipline is accepted. It is important that the employee require management to put on its evidence supporting the potential discipline.

A quick response by the steward who is notified of the hearing can prevent future problems. Every chapter should have formally notified the agency labor relations officer of chapter designated stewards. A pre-discipline meeting serves to let the employee know what evidence management is using to support the discipline. Having a pre-disciplinary meeting also helps the union identify and formulate their arguments for Step 3. It also helps the steward decide if a grievance should be filed. Remember, it is the chapter president's, not OCSEA Central Office's responsibility to notify the LRO of who the stewards are.