

Disciplinary and Grievance Procedures

A disciplinary procedure allows you as the employer to formally address any problems you may have with your personal assistant's work or behaviour, for example, lateness. Most problems can usually be solved by having an informal discussion with your personal assistant, however, having a written disciplinary procedure is good practice, and it allows you to deal with any serious problems that you may have in relation to your employee's work. It also ensures that both you as the employer and your personal assistant know where you stand and what steps to take when problems arise.

If you have to dismiss your worker, having a specific written procedure which both you as the employer and your employee have agreed to will help you to be seen as a reasonable and fair employer.

A grievance procedure allows your personal assistant to formally address any problems they may have with you.

For these procedures to work you need to be clear about the decisions you make, and keep clear records of what your personal assistant did, what actions you took to address it, and whether you issued your personal assistant with a warning etc.

If trying to deal with any problems informally (e.g. having a chat about it) does not work, a disciplinary procedure should work as follows:

Stage 1 Give your PA a verbal warning. This is valid for 6 months.

Stage 2 Written warning (valid for 6 months).

Stage 3 Final written warning (valid for 12 months).

Dismissal. If you have to dismiss a worker, it is good practice to write them a letter informing them of their dismissal, and setting out the disciplinary actions that led to their dismissal. Anybody that has worked for you for more than 2 years must be given a written statement of dismissal within 14 days if they ask for one.

Your PA should be given a chance to improve their behaviour or standard of work following a warning before you move onto the next stage in the procedure.

Gross Misconduct

Gross misconduct describes a situation where your PA's behaviour is so serious that you feel that you can no longer work with them. Examples of this might be theft, violence, breach of confidentiality etc.

Your PA may be able to claim unfair dismissal if this procedure is not followed or your actions as an employer are considered to be unreasonable.