



Golden Women in Business Conflict Resolution Policy

Golden Women in Business (GWIB) is committed to creating and maintaining an environment characterized by constructive, productive and supportive relationships. Such relationships are often subject to contrasting styles of understanding and acting and to different points of view. It is essential that we all recognize that human interactions are complex and often difficult, and that we all can contribute to their success.

All persons involved with GWIB have an obligation to communicate openly and respectfully with one another and to provide reasons for particular decisions or actions. When disagreements arise, greater understanding by all is needed. The presence of conflict, if dealt with effectively, offers an opportunity for individual and organizational learning, including the identification of policies and practices that need to be improved.

The Executive Committee is ultimately responsible for ensuring that conflicts involving members are resolved in a satisfactory manner. The Executive Committee may appoint a member to be responsible for overall management of the conflict and grievance process, including: intake of conflicts or grievances, investigation when required, recommendations to the Executive Committee, and other duties as determined by the Executive Committee. The appointed members have a duty to inform the Executive Committee of any conflicts that impinge on the organization's ability to function or may damage its reputation.

Conflicts should be addressed at the earliest possible opportunity as unresolved conflict can lead to a stressful environment for those directly involved in the conflict as well as pull in other members not directly involved in the conflict. Unresolved conflicts can undermine the organizations' purpose of providing for constructive, productive, and supportive relationships.

Eligibility: This policy covers grievances of the Diamond (paying) members of the organization. This policy does not create any legal rights for any person(s). The general public may submit comments through GWIB's regular communication channels and online contact form at any time.

In the event that any member is experiencing a GWIB-related conflict or has a complaint about the actions of another member, the following guidelines will apply. This policy is intended to create a neutral process. It is not intended to become a vehicle for obstructing the Organization's process or mission work. The Organization will take steps to prevent this policy from being used to harass or intimidate any person, group, or agency.

- 1) Communicate directly with the person or persons whose actions are the cause of the complaint. People should reasonably expect to know if their behavior or their decision is a problem for another person or group.
- 2) If the circumstances are such that the person with a complaint is unable or unwilling to communicate directly with the persons or persons whose actions are the cause of their complaint, either for fear of it going badly or of reprisal, the help of one other trusted person in the organization should be sought.
- 3) The parties will refrain from drawing others not directly involved into the process as a way of garnering support or gaining attention. Such actions include "copying" the written complaint by e-mail to others.
- 4) Complaints and conflicts shall be dealt with in a confidential manner. Meetings to resolve a complaint shall be open only to the parties and those attempting to resolve the complaint. The parties may have an advocate or supporter present. Meetings may be with the different parties individually, together or both. In the interest of openness, no minutes or written record of what is said in these meetings shall be recorded although, if the parties agree, the outcome of the meetings or a resulting agreement may be documented.
- 5) The parties, and those helping to resolve the conflict, should use face-to-face communication when possible, including the use of video conference calls to understand and help resolve the conflict. Face-to-face communication, as difficult as it is, should be relied upon as the preferred method of resolution. After receiving the initial complaint, e-mail should be the secondary form of communication to resolve the complaint. E-mail or text messages can be used as the primary for arranging meetings or communicating details of the resolution process. If a written complaint or grievance is made to the Executive Committee, the Executive Committee will document that the grievance is closed and provide sufficient description on the resolution as necessary to protect the organization.
- 6) The Executive Committee (with the assistance of any appointee(s)) will resolve complaints and conflicts that cannot be resolved by those directly involved or with the assistance of another member. In circumstances where it is the action of a member of the Executive Committee that is the reason for the conflict, the Executive Committee may address the complaint as indicated below.
- 7) If a grievance or complaint is filed, the following must be provided:
 - a) The full name, phone number, email address, and member status as of the date of filing for each named Grievant, along with their signature.
 - b) The complaint alleges a violation of a specific rule, regulation, policy, or principle directly pertaining to GWIB.
 - c) The date the actions occurred or commenced, and, if known, the full names of the person(s) responsible for the actions as well as their member status or role in GWIB.
 - d) All supporting documentation substantiating the complaint.
 - e) Any proposed solution or suggested changes.
- 8) Where the Executive Committee is involved in a conflict resolution role, communication with it by an aggrieved member should be directly and only with the President or the Executive Committee's appointee. It is the President's (or Appointee's) duty to inform the entire Executive Committee of the existence of the conflict but the Executive Committee may appoint one of their members, or an impartial party to help resolve the matter.
- 9) The Executive Committee (or their Appointee) will take the grievance under advisement to review and resolve the complaint, if possible. The Executive Committee will seek legal advice or other professional advice as needed and will otherwise execute its fiduciary duties in pursuit of a resolution to the complaint.
- 10) The Executive Committee (or its Appointee) will address the grievance either with written correspondence to the Grievant regarding the outcome or with action at a meeting held within 90 days of receipt of the grievance.

11) Third parties may be of assistance in helping resolve the conflict in a (1) facilitation or mediation role where the goal is to help the parties restore a positive working relationship in the future, or (2) a decision-making /arbitration role where they investigate what happened and make a determination of who is responsible for the situation and what the consequences for the parties should be. The choice of these two approaches may be discussed with the members involved depending on the type of conflict. The Executive Committee maintains sole decision-making authority on whether a third party will be brought in to resolve the conflict. If a mediated approach fails to resolve the matter, an arbitrated approach can be undertaken.

Approved and adopted:

Secretary

Date