



OFFICE PROBLEMS RESOLVED WITH HR PROGRAMS

The regular workforce for Penn is 16,300 people, with 16,000 more workers employed in the Health System. That's over 32,000 employees within the Penn family, which makes it a small city within a larger city, requiring a small army of dedicated workers to keep the company running without any problems. For the majority of people employed at Penn, getting along is not a problem, but when there are festering problems, the University has programs in place that are designed to ease those solutions. If everyone can get along at the University, then productivity will be at incredible rates. There is an informal program for staff members to solve office conflicts and it is known as the Division of Human Resources' Workplace Issue Resolution Program, according to the [Penn Current](#). The executive director of the Staff and Labor Relations Department within the school's HR department, Sharon Moorer Aylor, said that the program is used effectively when put into action in the infancy of a fight. Any level employee who has a complaint or a concern is encouraged to talk with someone from the Staff and Labor Relations Department or any of the University Resource Offices on campus. There are three options within the Workplace Issue Resolution Program. The first of those options is known as the Open Communication Philosophy. This option has the employee meeting with his or her supervisor, or others up the ladder in the supervisory chain in an effort to resolve the problem. This option also could involve the complainant meeting with the person whom he or she has a conflict. The second option in the program is called the Conference/Facilitated Meetings. This option allows a staff relations professional or University Resource Office professional address the issue so that the complainant does not have to be present to do so. A meeting between all parties involved could also be facilitated by the professional. The second option works best when the employee who filed the complaint does not feel comfortable speaking with the person whom he or she has a problem. The third and final option is Mediation, which only occurs when both parties agree to participate. Penn staff volunteers who are trained in mediation strategy encourage dialogue and assist in brainstorming solutions to the problem at hand. "We want to encourage people to raise workplace concerns because we know the sooner they raise them and they get resolved, the productivity of the area will improve, and the more civil and positive the work environment will be," Aylor says. Any employee of Penn who airs a complaint against another coworker or against a supervisor cannot be retaliated against. If an employee feels he or she is being retaliated against, it is best to contact the Office of Affirmative Action and Equal Opportunity Programs.

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