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Get the facts you need with a thorough workplace investigation.

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A workplace investigation is a process used to evaluate and address allegations of misconduct within an organization.

It is a formal process that requires a detailed and impartial review of the facts. The outcome of such an investigation will have a major effect on the organization, its employees and its reputation. As such, it is important to understand the process and be aware of any frequently asked questions that may arise during an investigation.

Knowing what to expect and having a plan in place can help ensure a successful and equitable outcome. We will address some of the most common questions that arise when it comes to workplace investigations.

These investigations can be internal or external and can be initiated for a wide variety of reasons.

An investigation is often necessary when there has been a lapse in communication or trust between parties. Incidents or complaints may arise where there is a dispute of facts, or where parties need clarification on appropriate actions or policies.

A workplace investigation is used to gather information and facts in a structured and unbiased way. Such an investigation will also be designed to protect all parties involved and to provide a safe environment for participants.

Why is a workplace investigation necessary?

A workplace investigation is necessary to provide clarity and to determine the facts in any given situation. It is also important to protect all parties involved. An investigation can help resolve disputes, issues of trust and provide a safe and non-judgmental forum for those involved to provide information.

An investigation can also help identify trends or patterns in broader issues within a workplace, which can then be addressed accordingly.

Who is responsible for conducting a workplace investigation?

In general, an investigation should be conducted by an unbiased and neutral third party. This is important as it will help to ensure all parties involved feel safe, secure and able to share information freely.

Ideally, the investigation should be conducted by someone from outside the organization who has experience in conducting workplace investigations. If there is an external HR partner involved in the investigation, then the external HR representative is the best choice for conducting the investigation.

What is the timeline for a workplace investigation?

There is no set timeline for a workplace investigation but there should be a general idea of how long it will take.

The timeline will depend on a number of factors, such as the subject matter of the investigation and the availability of participants.

It is important to set some initial timelines so everyone is aware of how long the investigation will take. The timelines can then be adjusted if necessary, as the investigation progresses.

What should employers expect to find during a workplace investigation?

Depending on the subject matter of the investigation, employers should expect to find a variety of things. In some cases, the investigation may find that no policy or procedure was breached.

In other cases, it may find that there was a breach of policy or procedure and that appropriate disciplinary action be taken against the responsible party(ies).

In some cases, it will find that there was a breach of policy or procedure, but that the breach was a one-off incident that may have been a mistake or an isolated incident where disciplinary action may not be appropriate.

In other cases, it may find that a policy or procedure was breached on a regular basis and that appropriate corrective/disciplinary action be taken against the responsible party(ies).

What steps should employers take to protect employee privacy during a workplace investigation?

Employers should be aware of the need to protect employee privacy during an investigation. This means treating all information shared by employees during an investigation as confidential.

Employers should ensure all employees are aware that information shared during an investigation is confidential. This includes the nature of the investigation, the participants and the findings. Employers should also ensure that any documents created or gathered during an investigation are kept confidential. Employers can do this by restricting access to only those who need to see the documents and by storing them in a secure location.

What should employers do after a workplace investigation is completed?

When the investigation has been completed, employers should document the findings of the investigation. This should include both the facts as determined in the investigation and the disciplinary action taken as a result of the investigation.

The documentation should be kept for a reasonable period of time, depending on the jurisdiction. If the organization is unionized, it is important to ensure the investigation findings and disciplinary action are communicated to the union.

What should employers do to prevent future workplace incidents?

Employers should be aware that workplace investigations do not prevent future workplace incidents. However, they can help employers to better understand why they happened, and they can help employers to improve their practices and policies.

Employers should take the opportunity to learn from any findings in the investigation. They should also take the time to address any issues that were identified during the investigation. This can help employers to prevent future issues and improve the overall culture of the organization.

What resources are available to employers who need help with a workplace investigation?

There are a number of resources employers can turn to when they need help with a workplace investigation. These include:

External investigators - Employers can contract the services of an external investigator that specializes in workplace investigations.

External HR services - Employers can also turn to an external HR service provider that specializes in workplace investigations.

Internal HR - Many organizations have an HR team that can help with internal workplace investigations.

Legal advisors - Employers can also turn to legal advisors if they need help with internal workplace investigations.

Conclusion

A workplace investigation is an impartial inquiry into alleged misconduct that takes place in the workplace. These investigations can be internal or external and can be initiated for a wide variety of reasons.

An investigation is often necessary when there has been a lapse in communication or trust between parties. Incidents or complaints may arise where there is a dispute of facts, or where parties need clarification on appropriate actions or policies.

A workplace investigation is used to gather information and facts in a structured and unbiased way. Such an investigation will also be designed to protect all parties involved and to provide a safe environment for participants.

A workplace investigation is necessary to provide clarity, to determine the facts in any given situation, and to protect all parties involved. An investigation can help resolve disputes, issues of trust, and provide a safe and non-judgmental forum for those involved to provide information. An investigation can also help identify trends or patterns in broader issues within a workplace, which can then be addressed accordingly.

About

Jolasers is a private investigations company who have performed workplace investigations throughout regional Victoria and a large portion of southern NSW.

Jolasers have been undertaking private investigation work since 2005 and have worked with both small to medium sized businesses as well as local governments and in the health sector.

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