

FORMAL MEETINGS - PART THREE: The Role of the Companion

In the previous two articles in this series we covered what happens during a disciplinary meeting and what happens when a formal grievance has been raised.

In this final article in this series we now turn our attention to the role of the Companion.

Role of the Companion

Staff have the right to be accompanied at any of the 3 types of meetings detailed below:

- Formal disciplinary meetings
- Formal grievance hearings
- Appeal meetings

Who is allowed to 'accompany' at these types of meetings?

- A work colleague
- An accredited trade union representative (an employee does not need to be a member of a trade union to have a union representative present. If a union representative is accompanying then they will be asked to provide proof that they are either employed by the trade union or accredited by the trade union to attend such meetings in the capacity of companion)

These are the only 2 categories of people allowed to accompany (unless company rules and procedures allows for any other category of person to attend)

If someone wishes you to accompany them then they will need to ask you. You are not obliged to attend as a companion and you cannot be forced to attend as a companion.

Your employer can reject who attends as a companion if:

- The person does not come into the categories detailed above
- The company feels that the companion's presence would prejudice the hearing
- The company can reject a request if the companion is from a remote geographical site when someone suitable and willing is available on site

If the chosen companion is not available on the scheduled date of the meeting, then the employee can ask for a postponement of up to 5 days in order for the chosen companion to attend.

What is the role of the companion at such meetings?

The companion can play an important role at such meetings:

- The companion can take notes
- They are at the meeting to provide the employee with support
- The companion can ask questions of the meeting
- The companion should be given the opportunity to address the meeting on the employee's behalf
- However, if a question is asked directly of the employee, the companion cannot respond on the employee's behalf
- If the employee does not wish the companion to speak then the employee can ask for this
- The companion and the employee can ask for a short break to speak privately
- The employee can have a short time with their companion prior to the meeting in order to prepare for the meeting
- The companion cannot prevent the employer from explaining their case

When is a companion not allowed to attend?

When a meeting is an informal discussion/chat, where the meeting is merely an investigatory meeting or where the meeting is a counselling session.



in the shed answers

QUICK 'NINE HOLE' QUIZ ANSWERS:

1. Tom Watson (77), Greg Norman (86) and Nick Price (94)
2. Wolves, Birmingham, Burnley.
3. Ian McGeechan 4. Shinty
5. 1908 and 1948 6. 61
7. 1951 by Max Faulkner at Royal Portrush
8. 12. Six stumps four balls and two bats
9. Kenneth Wolstenholme

CROSSWORD

O	G	O		F	A	D	T	J	
W	O	R	L	D	F	A	I	R	A
N	U	D	G	E	I	U	C		
B	U	B	B	L	E	A	N	D	S
R		O	T	F	U	C	K		
A	L	L	O	T	H	O	L	E	I
N	I		A	I	R	L			
D	Y	N	A	M	I	C	N	A	I
	E	A	H	T		R	N		
A	M	B	E	R	G	R	I	S	S
B	A	C	Q	I	T	Y	S	H	I
J	A	C	Q	U	E	S	C	O	U
E	K	A	T	N	T	B	I		
C	L	E	A	N	I	N	E	L	E
T	R	D	Y	E		M	Y	Y	

MONSTER SUDOKU

5	9	4	2	8	6	3	1	7	C	B	A
8	1	B	3	7	A	4	C	9	5	2	6
A	6	7	C	9	5	B	2	1	8	4	3
C	8	5	1	4	7	9	6	2	A	3	B
7	B	3	9	2	8	5	A	4	6	C	1
6	2	A	4	C	3	1	B	5	7	9	8
2	C	1	5	A	4	8	9	3	B	6	7
B	3	9	8	1	2	6	7	C	4	A	5
4	A	6	7	5	B	C	3	8	2	1	9
9	5	2	B	3	C	A	8	6	1	7	4
3	7	8	6	B	1	2	4	A	9	5	C
1	4	C	A	6	9	7	5	B	3	8	2

Monster Daily SuDoku: Wed 22-Jul-2009 very hard

SQUIGGLY SUDOKU

5	7	2	1	6	4	3	9	8
8	4	3	9	5	7	2	1	6
1	9	6	3	2	8	4	7	5
9	1	4	6	8	2	5	3	7
2	6	8	7	3	5	1	4	9
7	3	5	4	1	9	8	6	2
3	2	1	5	7	6	9	8	4
4	5	7	8	9	1	6	2	3
6	8	9	2	4	3	7	5	1

Daily SuDoku: Wed 22-Jul-2009 hard