

## Best practices for representation

### Personal contact

Always have a face-to-face conversation with member(s) thinking about filing a complaint under the policy. This will help you begin your assessment of possible violations and begin to earn trust from someone who may be very fearful.

### Documentation

Help ensure that the member fully documents the complaint; including witnesses, source and definition of the behavior, effects on work and health, and duration of experience. This documentation becomes your evidence.

### Investigation

Try to accompany the member(s) when it's their time to be interviewed for the complaint.

### Process

Do not allow the process to stall. Keep the process moving, and if things aren't being handled timely, re-strategize your next step.

### Retaliation

Be a watchdog for retaliation. Frequently communicate with the member so they know they are supported. They must document specific retaliative behaviors. Don't count on the agency to do that. If retaliation happens, immediately report it to HR and your chief steward. If HR doesn't take steps to stop the retaliation, ramp up your efforts.

### Oversight

Keep in contact with HR while they're handling the complaint so they understand your role is to ensure the work environment becomes healthy.

### Resolution

If the solution does not resolve the problem, your work is not done. Strategize next steps with your chief steward, steward group and business agent.

### Tracking

Always let your chief steward and business agent know that you are helping a member with a formal complaint. That will enable the task force to track outcomes or problems.



**Respectful Workplace Policy:  
Representing members in the process**