**STEWARD’S ROLE IN INVESTIGATIONS**

**Stewards rights:**

* You have the right to briefly caucus with the member before the start of the investigation to learn what you can about possible allegations
* You have the right to call a caucus during the investigation if the member gets emotional or upset – body language is noted in an investigation – keep the member professional
* You have the right to speak; clarify a question, object to irrelevant or repetitive questioning, ensure a professional and neutral atmosphere is kept intact

**Offer advice to member before the investigation:**

* Explain that the meeting belongs to the employer and explain your role
* Advise to tell the truth, don’t lie – do not offer more information than is necessary to answer a question – no rambling
* Do not feel pressured to manufacture an answer if you don’t recall – “I do not remember” is appropriate
* If you feel a need to caucus let me know
* Keep your emotions and body language in check
* You can expect to sign a Tennessen Warning – outlines why data is being collected, who has access to it, how data will be used and if you are here voluntarily. Always ask for a copy of the signed document

**During the investigation:**

* Insist prior to questioning that the allegation be made clear
* If the allegation is serious enough ask the investigator if there is a possibility of criminal charges- if yes or maybe, caucus and let the member know that can decide if they want to consult with an attorney before moving ahead
* Advise the member to offer any witnesses that may be helpful
* Keep notes especially of red flag issues that may be critical if discipline occurs and is grieved
* Make sure the questions are understood and atmosphere is professional and respectful

**At the conclusions of the investigation:**

* Remind the member they can request a copy of their interview
* Ask investigator what next steps and timeline will be
* Ask who the decision maker will be on this matter
* If the member has further information or things they remember how they contact the investigator
* Remind the member to stay confidential about the investigation

**Things for you to remember:**

* If the investigation outcome leads to a grievance, it is at that point the steward can sign a stipulation to receive the whole investigation report including evidence and witness statement redacted
* There is no specific timeline for a decision but if the member doesn’t hear in a timely manner a question can be asked of HR regarding where things are at
* Let your Chief Steward know how it went and any concerns