

Investigation Plan Guidelines

1. What is being investigated?

It may be a specific allegation or a series of allegations. It may be a number of interrelated issues. It is important to keep the issue(s) as narrow and focused as possible.

2. What sections of the organization's discrimination policy are triggered by the complaint?

Identifying the relevant provisions at play in a given complaint at an early stage will help focus the investigation and ensure that the investigator is obtaining the facts necessary to determine whether a violation of the policy has occurred.

3. What is the overall approach to conducting the investigation?

Preparing a brief outline setting out the overall approach to conducting the investigation. This draws the 'big picture' of how it is anticipated that the investigation will unfold, what investigative steps will be taken, and in what order?

4. Who are the potential witnesses?

Listing the people who you as the investigator will likely want to speak to during the investigation including why you want to speak with them as well as where they are located. Will you be speaking with them in person, by phone or by other means?

5. What do you believe will be the key pieces of evidence and who is in possession of that evidence?

Identify what documentary, physical and digital evidence have to be gathered. This could include:

- **Laws and standards** - Understanding the legal, regulatory standards that apply. This will provide both context and a baseline for the investigation.
- **Documents** – What documents may be relevant to the investigation? Who has them? Where are they?
- **Physical and digital evidence** – For both types of evidence, it will be necessary to work out where it is, and how it is going to be secured?

6. What problems might arise during the investigation and how can those problems be mitigated?

As the investigator you should attempt to identify possible special considerations that, based on knowledge of the case or past experience, may arise during the investigation. Possible solutions should be considered for tackling them or getting around them should they arise. Typical challenges or issues that might occur include:

- Lack of cooperation
- Fear of reprisal
- Collusion between witnesses

- Culture or language
- Access to sources of evidence
- Potential destruction of or tampering with evidence

7. What are the milestones and timelines?

As the plan is developed, setting out realistic targets and goals for completing various stages of the investigation. Factor in how much actual control there will be over the pace of the investigation. This should include estimating how long it will take to receive documents, how long it will take to review them, and how long the interviews will take.

8. When will the investigation be completed?

Having a rough estimate when the investigation will be completed, factoring in:

- The complexity of the issue(s).
- How much background research has to be done?
- How much evidence is there to be collected, including number of potential witnesses and amount of documentation and evidence?
- How any impediments identified earlier will factor into the equation?
- How long it will take to analyze the evidence?
- How long it will take to write the final investigative report?