

**DEFINITION:**

A *grievance* is an objection lodged against a DONA certified doula or DONA member in which the doula is accused of behavior that violates DONA International's Standards of Practice and/or Code of Ethics. It may be submitted by anyone, including but not limited to the client, her partner or family, a nurse, the client's care provider, a hospital administrator, another doula, a DONA certified doula, a DONA approved doula trainer; or it may be originated by the Grievance Committee.

If the objection is determined not to involve possible violations of the DONA International Standards of Practice and/or Code of Ethics by a DONA certified doula or DONA member, then it is not a grievance. It remains, by definition, a *complaint*.

An *incident* is any potentially negative occurrence arising in a birth or postpartum support situation and involves the DONA certified doula or DONA member as the provider. The *incident* may be submitted by the doula herself or another party.

**GOAL AND PURPOSE:**

The goal in having a Grievance Procedure is to provide a mechanism through which the public and the community of doulas may be protected if there is alleged misconduct on the part of a DONA certified doula or DONA member.

The purpose of the Grievance Procedure is to provide a vehicle in which a complaint may be brought, a fair and complete investigation undertaken and appropriate action taken.

**SUBMITTING A GRIEVANCE:**

When submitting an objection, the following procedure must be followed:

- Complete the Grievance Submission Form below explaining the details of the objection. Include all relevant facts and any supporting documents.
- Mail the completed Grievance Submission Form and supporting documents to Grievance Committee Chair, DONA International, 1582 South Parker Road, Suite 201, Denver, CO 80231.

**DONA INTERNATIONAL PROCEDURE:**

- Confirmation of receipt of the objection will be mailed to the complainant via certified mail.
- The Grievance Chair will provide written copies of the objection to the Grievance Committee and the doula under review.
- The doula under review will be given an opportunity to respond.
- The Grievance Committee will evaluate the objection, determine whether it is a complaint or grievance and make recommendations of possible sanctions.
- All involved parties will be notified in writing by the Grievance Committee Chair of the findings of the investigation and informed of any resulting action recommended by the Grievance Committee.
- Grievance Committee deliberations will remain confidential and only the matters discussed in the letter to the involved parties will be disclosed. The documents gathered for the investigation will remain on file with DONA International.

**CONFIDENTIALITY:**

- All parties involved in the Grievance Procedure, including the complainant, the DONA certified doula or DONA member in question, members of the Grievance Committee and Board of Directors and any third parties must agree to keep confidential for all time any and all verbal or written communications regarding the mediation, negotiations, conclusions and/or sanctions of the grievance, complaint or incident filed with DONA International.

**DONA INTERNATIONAL GRIEVANCE SUBMISSION FORM**

Date submitted:		Date(s) of occurrence:	
Complainant Name(s):			
Address:			
City:	State/Province:		Zip/Postal Code:
Phone No.:		E-mail:	
Doula's Name:			
Doula's Phone No.:		Doula's E-mail:	
Provide a detailed description of your objection below. Attach additional sheets and supporting documents, as necessary.			