

Issue: Consolidation of grievances for a single hearing; Ruling Date: March 4, 2011; Ruling No. 2011-2910, 2011-2911; Agency: Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Services; Outcome: Consolidation Granted.



*COMMONWEALTH of VIRGINIA*  
*Department of Employment Dispute Resolution*

**CONSOLIDATION RULING OF DIRECTOR**

In the matter of the Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Services  
Ruling Numbers 2011-2910, 2011-2911  
March 4, 2011

This ruling addresses the consolidation of the grievant's two grievances filed with the Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Services (the agency) on or about January 26, 2011. For the reasons discussed below, this Department finds that consolidation of these grievances into a single hearing is appropriate and practicable.

FACTS

The two grievances at issue, dated January 26, 2011, concern the issuance to the grievant of two Written Notices, which culminated in her termination. After the parties failed to resolve the grievances during the management resolution steps, the agency head qualified the grievances for hearing. The agency has asked for appointment of a hearing officer in these matters. Both parties have agreed to the consolidation of these grievances for a single hearing.

DISCUSSION

Approval by the Director of this Department or her designee in the form of a compliance ruling is required before two or more grievances may be consolidated in a single hearing. Moreover, EDR may consolidate grievances for hearing without a request from either party.<sup>1</sup> EDR strongly favors consolidation and will consolidate grievances when they involve the same parties, legal issues, policies, and/or factual background, unless there is a persuasive reason to process the grievances individually.<sup>2</sup>

This Department finds that consolidation of the two January 26, 2011 grievances is appropriate. These grievances involve the same grievant and could share common themes, claims, and witnesses. Moreover, the grievances all relate to the issuance of the Written

---

<sup>1</sup> *Grievance Procedure Manual* § 8.5.

<sup>2</sup> *See id.*

Notices to the grievant and her termination. Further, we find that consolidation is not impracticable in this instance. Therefore, the grievant's two January 26, 2011 grievances are consolidated for a single hearing. A hearing officer will be appointed in a forthcoming letter.

This Department's rulings on compliance are final and nonappealable.<sup>3</sup>

---

Claudia T. Farr  
Director

---

<sup>3</sup> See Va. Code §§ 2.2-1001(5), 2.2-3003(G).