

Issue: Consolidation of Grievances for a Single Hearing. Ruling Date: May 20, 2011; Ruling No.2011-2983, 2011-2984; Agency: Department of Juvenile Justice; Outcome: Consolidation Granted.



COMMONWEALTH of VIRGINIA
Department of Employment Dispute Resolution

CONSOLIDATION RULING OF DIRECTOR

In the matter of the Department of Juvenile Justice
Ruling Numbers 2011-2983, 2011-2984
May 20, 2011

This ruling addresses the consolidation of the grievant's two grievances filed with the Department of Juvenile Justice (the agency). 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, both dated March 31, 2011, concern a Written Notice and a non-disciplinary salary reduction following a voluntary demotion. 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 and requested that the grievances be consolidated for a single hearing. The grievant does not object to the consolidation request.

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.¹ 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.²

This Department finds that consolidation of the grievant's two March 31, 2011 grievances is appropriate. These grievances involve the same grievant and could share common themes, claims, and witnesses. Further, we find that consolidation is not

¹ *Grievance Procedure Manual* § 8.5.

² *See id.*

impracticable in this instance. Therefore, in light of the parties' agreement that consolidation is acceptable, the grievant's March 31, 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.³

Claudia T. Farr
Director

³ See Va. Code §§ 2.2-1001(5), 2.2-3003(G).