

Planning the Investigation

Spending a little time planning the investigation will help you anticipate and avoid problems that may crop up while the investigation is under way. The planning process need not be a lengthy one—you want to start the investigation as soon as possible. But thinking out issues such as who will be involved and where interviews will take place are crucial steps that should not be overlooked.

Once the employer has determined who the investigator will be, that investigator will need to get to work quickly. If you will be the investigator, a little advance planning will go a long way toward ensuring that the investigation is fair, thorough, and legal—and that it gathers the necessary information. As you plan the investigation, consider

- what adjustments to work assignments will be necessary during the investigation;
- how soon the investigation can begin and the best way to schedule interviews;
- where interviews can be conducted (give consideration to confidentiality);
- who must be interviewed (complainant, respondent, witnesses);
- participation in the investigation by any other parties;
- who has a need to know updated information as the information progresses;
- what documents and resources you will give to the complainant, respondent, and witnesses; and
- what documents or other evidence you will want to collect from the complainant, respondent, or from the workspace.

A checklist for planning the investigation is found at Figure 10.