



Bellatora Files: The Grievance Game — Complete Guide

This guide combines the full Bellatora Grievance Game with Chapter 33-103 policy breakdowns and the website accordion content for a complete, easy-to-follow resource. It's designed to match the tone, style, and power of Bellatora Tirado — sharp, factual, and made for families and advocates who fight smart.

What is a Grievance?

A grievance is the official way an inmate can raise a complaint or report a violation of policy, law, or rights. It's not a favor or a privilege — it's a legal right protected under Florida Administrative Code Chapter 33-103. When used correctly, it becomes your strongest tool for accountability and documentation.

Purpose of the Grievance Process

The grievance process exists to ensure that inmates have a structured, lawful way to address problems within the system. It allows for official complaints to be filed about mistreatment, unsafe conditions, retaliation, or any policy violations. Every step forces the Department of Corrections to respond, document, and be held accountable for its actions.

How the Process Works

The Florida DOC grievance process follows three main levels, with options for emergencies or sensitive matters. Each level must be completed in order — unless the issue involves danger, retaliation, or urgent medical need.

How and When to File a Grievance

1. Informal Grievance (First Step)

File within 20 days of the issue using Form DC1-303. Staff must respond within 10 days per Rule 33-103.005.

2. Formal Grievance (Second Step)



If unresolved, escalate to the Warden within 15 days. Include the original grievance and response. The Warden has 20 days to reply (Rule 33-103.006).

3. Appeal to the Secretary (Final Step)

File within 15 days of the Warden's response to the Central Office. The Secretary has 30 days to answer (Rule 33-103.007).

4. Emergency or Sensitive Grievance

Skip lower levels when waiting could cause harm or retaliation. Label as 'EMERGENCY' or 'SENSITIVE' per Rules 33-103.007(6) and 33-103.010.

Florida Administrative Code: Chapter 33-103 Overview

Rule Number	Title	Purpose
33-103.001	Purpose and Definitions	Defines grievance types and rights.
33-103.002	Grievance Forms	Lists approved forms (DC6-236, DC1-303).
33-103.005	Informal Grievance	Covers first-level filing procedure.
33-103.006	Formal Grievance	Outlines escalation to Warden.
33-103.007	Appeals and Direct Grievances	Details Secretary-level appeals and emergencies.
33-103.008	Time Frames	Sets all filing and response deadlines.
33-103.009	Medical Grievances	Allows bypass of lower levels for medical care issues.



33-103.010	Emergency Grievances	Covers immediate danger or harm cases.
33-103.011	Responses	Specifies response tracking and numbering.
33-103.015	Records	Requires DOC to keep grievance logs and documentation.

What You Can and Can't Grieve

You CAN Grieve:

- Unsafe or unsanitary conditions
- Denied or delayed medical care
- Unfair disciplinary actions
- Lost or damaged property
- Staff retaliation or abuse
- Visitation, mail, or phone restrictions
- Classification or gain-time errors

You CANNOT Grieve:

- Court decisions or sentences
- Parole Commission rulings
- Laws or rules passed by the legislature
- Actions of outside agencies
- Issues of another inmate (unless impacting your safety)



Bellatora Takeaway

A grievance only has power if it's on time. The system runs on deadlines — so should you. This isn't help. It's strategy. Paperwork is power, and when you understand Chapter 33-103, you turn the system's own rules into your weapon.

— *Bellatora Tirado Advocacy Resource Series* —
