

6C7-3.0191 Disciplinary Action - University Support Personnel System.

(1) Scope and Purpose.

(a) This rule applies to all University Support Personnel System employees of the university with regular status. The provisions of this rule are subject to applicable provisions of collective bargaining agreements. Employee discipline is an action that is to be undertaken with care, objectivity, and with full consideration of the rights and interests of both the employee and the university.

(b) The university subscribes to the principle of the use of discipline to correct employee conduct and behavior. Such discipline will normally be issued in a progressive manner, dependent upon the facts and circumstances of each case. Penalties will be imposed, dependent upon the seriousness of the offense and any aggravating or mitigating circumstances, or as otherwise required by law.

(c) Probationary Employees: The probationary period shall be a working-test period required of any USPS employee following appointment to any class in which the employee does not hold regular status. It is important to note that for purposes of discipline, regular status refers to an employee's status in the USPS and not a specific position. Consequently, an employee with regular status in USPS, but in probationary status in a class, may be removed from the class during this probationary period, without the application of these standards. New employees, in probationary status in the USPS may be dismissed during this probationary period without the use of these standards and without the right of appeal.

(2) Guidelines on Employee Discipline. The immediate supervisor has the primary responsibility for taking or requesting disciplinary action against an employee, but should consult with their higher level authority. Human Resources has the responsibility of providing guidance to the various departmental units with regard to the administration of disciplinary actions and for assuring that they are accomplished in accordance with USPS regulations and the policies and guidelines of the university.

(3) Delegation of Authority. Discipline may only be administered by the supervisor who has been delegated the authority to do so. This delegation of authority varies with the severity of the disciplinary action and is identified in the following table:

Disciplinary Action	Authority
Oral Reprimand	Employee's immediate supervisor or higher level supervisor
Written Reprimand	Employee's immediate supervisor or higher level supervisor with the approval of the department head
Suspension, Discharge	The dean, director or department head shall arrange for a review of the proposed action by the Director of Human Resources, or his/her designee. If the proposed action is approved, the Director of Human Resources, or his/her designee, will implement the suspension/discharge.

(4) Types of Disciplinary Action.

(a) Oral Reprimand – Involves a discussion between the supervisor and the employee regarding the infraction with an emphasis on correcting the employee's behavior. A written confirmation of an oral reprimand may be kept in the employee's personnel file.

(b) Written Reprimand – For more serious or repeated cases of rules infractions, the supervisor, with approval of the second level supervisor, will counsel the employee as to the correct and expected behavior as well as record the circumstances of the violation in memorandum form, giving the original to the employee and sending a copy to Human Resources.

(c) Suspension – The suspension of an employee shall normally be based on the recommendations of the supervisor and shall be subject to the approval of the dean, director or department head and the Director of Human Resources or his/her designee to ensure consistency of action throughout the institution. The Director of Human Resources or his/her designee will issue all suspensions. If authorized by the Director of Human Resources or his/her designee, a suspension pending an investigation may be authorized with or without pay and may also be continued between the notice of adverse action and date of final action. Employees who are discharged for disciplinary reasons will not be eligible for rehire.

(d) Discharge – When less severe actions fail in correcting an employee's job related behavior, or when the offense requires immediate separation from employment, a discharge action should be taken. The supervisor shall normally recommend the action, and it shall be subject to the approval of the dean, director or department head and the Director of Human Resources or his/her designee, who shall issue the discharge.

(5) Standards for Disciplinary Actions. Included herein are standards for the administration of disciplinary actions for various types of offenses. The following is not all-inclusive, and the disciplinary action selected for a

particular offense will be chosen based on the facts of the specific situation taking into consideration any extenuating circumstances. These standards do not preclude the imposition of more or less severe penalties depending upon all circumstances and previous offenses. Previous offenses will be considered when determining the level of discipline to impose as to a new offense subject to the following: after two years have elapsed from the date of written reprimand or oral reprimand, such reprimand will not be used for escalating the level of disciplinary action but will be referred; suspensions and written reprimands in lieu of suspension can be used indefinitely, with no time limit whatsoever. These standards do not preclude the imposition of more or less severe penalties depending upon all circumstances surrounding a particular incident.

(a) Absence Without Authorized Leave. The failure to secure approval for an absence from work during the established shift or work period.

1. First occurrence: Written reprimand.
2. Second occurrence: Suspension.
3. Third occurrence: Discharge.

Provided, however, that the failure to secure approval for an absence of two or more consecutive days shall be considered a second occurrence; and the failure to secure approval for an absence of three or more consecutive days shall be considered a third occurrence. This rule shall also apply to employees who fail to return to work as specified in an approved leave of absence.

(b) Abuse of Sick Leave. Falsification by an employee of a notification of absence due to personal illness, injury or exposure to contagious disease.

1. First occurrence: Suspension or discharge.
2. Second occurrence: Discharge.

(c) Possession or Use of a Deadly Weapon or a Dangerous Material. Possession or use of firearms, fireworks of any description, explosives, chemicals which are disruptive, explosive, or corrosive in nature, or any weapon other than a common pocket knife.

1. First occurrence: Suspension or discharge.
2. Second occurrence: Discharge.

(d) Damage or Destruction of University Property or Equipment. The actual or attempted damage, destruction, or careless operation of university property or equipment which may or may not result in personal injury. (If personal injury does result, more severe discipline may be imposed.) Sabotaging equipment or facilities will result in discharge.

1. First occurrence: Written reprimand to discharge.
2. Second occurrence: Suspension or discharge.
3. Third occurrence: Discharge.

(e) Conduct Unbecoming a Public Employee. Any act or acts on or off the job, that renders an employee ineffective within the university, affects the ability for acceptance by others, or poses a threat to the safety and well-being of members of the university community.

1. First occurrence: Suspension or discharge.
2. Second occurrence: Discharge.

(f) Conviction of a Misdemeanor or Felony. When an employee is convicted of a misdemeanor or felony as a result of a crime committed on or off the job and that conviction results in a negative effect on the employee's ability or availability to perform the duties of the job whether immediate or in the future.

1. First occurrence: Suspension or discharge.
2. Second occurrence: Discharge.

(g) Absenteeism. The university has a right to expect that employees will be available to perform work with a reasonable degree of regularity and to conduct their personal business using accrued leave without the need to resort to the use of approved leave without pay or unscheduled absences. If there is a pattern of absence by the employee, such as consistent absence on the day preceding or following the employee's regular days off, absence on the same day of each week or each month, or absences that occur with such frequency as to constitute a hardship on the office/department, these absences may be considered excessive. Included under this standard are absences that are not reported to management in accordance with departmental and university guidelines.

1. First occurrence: Oral reprimand.
2. Second occurrence: Written reprimand.
3. Third occurrence: Suspension.
4. Fourth occurrence: Discharge.

(h) Tardiness. The failure to report to work at an established time at the beginning of the work shift, or the late return to work at the established time after lunch or rest period.

1. First occurrence: Oral reprimand.
2. Second occurrence: Written reprimand.
3. Third occurrence: Suspension.
4. Fourth occurrence: Discharge.

(i) Misuse of Confidential Information. To use or disclose information not otherwise available to the general public and gained by reason of his or her official position for his or her personal gain or benefit of any other person or business entity.

1. First occurrence: Written reprimand to discharge.
2. Second occurrence: Suspension.
3. Third occurrence: Discharge.

(j) Falsification of Records. The misrepresentation or omission of any facts, whether verbal or written, with the intent to defraud or otherwise mislead.

1. First occurrence: Written reprimand to discharge.
2. Second occurrence: Discharge.

(k) Fighting. A physical assault on or against another person.

1. First occurrence: Written reprimand to discharge.
2. Second occurrence: Discharge.

(l) Horseplay. Actions which are intended to be mischievous or prankish rather than malicious. If personal injury results, more severe disciplinary action up to and including suspension or discharge will be considered on the first occurrence.

1. First occurrence: Oral reprimand.
2. Second occurrence: Written reprimand.
3. Third occurrence: Suspension.
4. Fourth occurrence: Discharge.

(m) Insubordination. The unwillingness or refusal to comply with a direct order or any established work assignment of the immediate supervisor or higher level supervisor. This includes, but is not limited to, the refusal to carry out an assignment, refusal to work overtime, willful delay in carrying out an assignment, or responding with defiance to a reasonable work order or assignment issued by the immediate supervisor or higher level supervisor.

1. First occurrence: Suspension.
2. Second occurrence: Discharge.

(n) Leaving Work Station Without Authorization. The unauthorized absence by an employee from the work station or duty location during the established work period or the leaving of a work station for a lunch or rest period without being properly relieved where that station must be maintained during such period.

1. First occurrence: Written reprimand to suspension.
2. Second occurrence: Suspension.
3. Third occurrence: Discharge.

(o) Loafing. The continued idleness or nonproductiveness during working hours which diverts the employee from performing assigned tasks. This includes wasting time, engaging in idle talk or gossip, conducting personal business, or using business phone or computers for personal reasons.

1. First occurrence: Oral reprimand to written reprimand.
2. Second occurrence: Written reprimand to suspension.
3. Third occurrence: Suspension to discharge.
4. Fourth occurrence: Discharge.

(p) Misuse of Position. The misuse of powers of authority that accompany a position for personal advantages such as to assist friends or family for financial or other gains.

1. First occurrence: Written reprimand to discharge.
2. Second occurrence: Discharge.

(q) Misuse of University or University Controlled Property or Equipment. The unauthorized use of any university or university controlled property or equipment for any reason other than for official university business.

1. First occurrence: Written reprimand to discharge.
2. Second occurrence: Discharge.

(r) Neglect of Duty. Carelessness in omission of, or inattention to, the performance of assigned duties and responsibilities. Negligence is synonymous with carelessness and signifies lack of care, caution, attention, diligence, or discretion.

1. First occurrence: Written reprimand to discharge.
2. Second occurrence: Discharge.

(s) Abuse of Intoxicants. Being under the influence of, being in possession of, the sale of, or the distribution of any controlled substances or illegal drugs while on duty. (This provision does not extend to prescribed use of prescription medications.)

1. First offense: Suspension to discharge.

2. Second offense: Discharge.

(t) Rudeness to Students, Staff or the Public. Impolite, discourteous, unprofessional, or uncooperative language or actions towards students, staff, or the public.

1. First occurrence: Oral reprimand.

2. Second occurrence: Written reprimand.

3. Third occurrence: Suspension.

4. Fourth occurrence: Discharge.

(u) Sexual Harassment. Any unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature when (1) submission to such conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of employment, (2) submission to or rejection of such conduct by an individual is used as basis for employment or personnel decisions, or (3) when such conduct has the purpose or effect of substantially interfering with performance of work or creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive working environment.

1. First occurrence: Written reprimand to discharge.

2. Second occurrence: Discharge.

(v) Sleeping While on Duty. The failure of an employee to remain awake while on duty during the established work shift.

1. First occurrence: Suspension.

2. Second occurrence: Discharge.

(w) Theft or Stealing. The unauthorized taking of any property or service.

First occurrence: Discharge.

(x) Threatening and/or Abusive Language. The use of language which is threatening, profane, vulgar, or abusive.

1. First occurrence: Written reprimand to discharge.

2. Second occurrence: Discharge.

(y) Violation of Safety Practices. The failure to adhere to or follow established safety rules. This includes the failure to report an accident of an employee involving personal injury, failure to wear safety equipment, and the performance of any unsafe action.

1. First occurrence: Written reprimand to suspension.

2. Second occurrence: Discharge.

(z) Willful Violation of a Provision of Law or State Board of Education or University Rule. The deliberate failure to abide by State Board of Education or University Rules or to follow the statutes governing employment by the State of Florida. This may include, but is not limited to giving or accepting a bribe, discrimination in employment, or illegal campaigning.

1. First occurrence: Written reprimand to discharge.

2. Second occurrence: Discharge.

(aa) Strike or Concerted Activity. Instigating or supporting in any manner a strike. A strike is defined by Florida Statute as: The concerted failure of employees to report for duty; the concerted absence of employees from their positions; the concerted stoppage of work by employees; the concerted submission of resignations by employees; the concerted abstinence in whole or in part by any group of employees from the full and faithful performance of the duties of employment with the university for the purpose of inducing, influencing, condoning, or coercing a change in the terms and conditions of employment or participating in a deliberate and concerted course of conduct which adversely affects the services of the public employer; the concerted failure of employees to report for work after the expiration of a collective bargaining agreement; and picketing in furtherance of a work stoppage. The term "strike" shall also mean any overt preparation, including but not limited to, the establishment of strike funds with regard to the above activities.

First occurrence: Discharge.

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