



County of Schuylkill Personnel Policy and Procedure
--

Date Issued: September 2005	Subject: Conduct and Disciplinary Action	Policy Number: 2005-19
Revised:	Supersedes:	Page: ___1___ of ___6___

This policy applies to all departments and employees except if superseded by bargaining unit agreement or court-appointed policy

POLICY

Guidelines for the acceptable conduct of associates are necessary for the orderly operation of The County of Schuylkill and for the benefit and protection of the rights and safety of all customers and employees. Failure to adhere to these guidelines is the basis for issuing disciplinary actions. This policy provides managers with guidelines on issuing disciplinary actions; by this policy all associates are instructed in what is considered unacceptable conduct and expectations for compliance. Managers are encouraged by these guidelines to exercise fair, consistent action in the event of violations. The purposes of disciplinary actions are to be corrective, rather than punitive in nature.

Nothing in this policy alters the “at-will” relationship between employer and employee; management reserves the right to change policy at any time and to terminate the employment relationship for any non-discriminatory reason.

PROCEDURE

1. All associates are expected to conduct themselves in accordance with the following standards:
 - A. Work performance
 1. Performs assigned duties diligently and efficiently.
 2. Performs assigned duties at acceptable standards of quality and quantity.
 3. Meets work deadlines.
 4. Follows instructions and seeks additional instruction as necessary to perform assigned duties.
 5. Maintains the confidentiality of information and releases confidential information only as authorized.
 6. Uses County equipment only when authorized and only in a safe manner.
 7. Uses work time for County business only.
 8. Complies with all County policies regarding use of safety equipment, sanitation and fire regulations.

B. Attitude and Conduct

1. Complies with the obligations of The County of Schuylkill's policies and procedures, including reporting violations and/or non-compliance, and investigating/reporting violations.
2. Uses work-time for performance of assigned duties.
3. Dresses in appropriate clothing which supports a professional image and otherwise maintains a proper appearance while on duty. Maintains a high level of personal hygiene.
4. Wears photo identification badge at all times (photo facing forward).
5. Attends meetings and gatherings during work-time only with the knowledge and approval of the supervisor.
6. Treats all fellow associates and visitors with respect.
7. Complies with all policies regarding smoking, accepting tips/gifts and engaging in outside activities which may detract from or adversely affect the interest of the county.
8. Posts notices and distributes materials in the County premises only after approval of the County Administrator, confines all other solicitation and distribution of materials in compliance with County Policy and to non-work time.

C. Attendance and Punctuality

1. Attends all mandatory training sessions as scheduled.
2. Maintains an appropriate work record, minimizing disruptions to the unit by giving advance notice of lateness.
3. Schedules paid leave in accordance with County Policy and departmental procedures.
4. Notifies and seeks the approval of the supervisor before leaving assigned work area during scheduled work hours.
5. Follows County Policy and Procedure in requesting a leave of absence.
6. Accepts reasonable overtime requests for scheduled overtime and on-call assignments.
7. Responds to emergency call in or disasters as required.

2. Prohibited Activities

All associates are expected to refrain from the following activities:

A. Work performance

1. County equipment may not be used for personal work unless authorized to do so has been obtained from the department director.

B. Attitude and Conduct

1. Sleeping on duty, lounging in work areas and waiting areas, entertaining personal visitors while on duty, bringing children to work, gambling and other non-work related activities.
2. Reporting to work or attempting to work while under the influence of alcohol or illegal substances.
3. Any fighting or using threatening gestures or words while on duty.
4. Engaging in disorderly, immoral or indecent conduct and possessing unauthorized firearms or weapons on County property.
5. Harassing an employee or visitor both during and after working hours.
6. Making statements of an abusive, malicious or threatening nature to or about fellow employee, the County or a member of its supervisory or management staff.
7. Stealing, willful or careless destruction/damage to the property of a customer or the County.
8. Engaging in solicitation during work time unless authorized to do so.

C. Attendance and Punctuality

1. Misrepresenting reasons when applying for a leave of absence or other time off of work.

3. Disciplinary Actions

- A. All disciplinary actions must be documented using the Disciplinary Action Form (Attachment 1). The department director and/or immediate supervisor must present the Disciplinary Action to the associate in person. A copy of the Disciplinary Action will be given to the associate upon request. The original, signed Disciplinary Action form must be given to Human Resources for filing in the associate's Personnel File.
1. An associate receiving discipline will be asked to sign the Disciplinary Action Form acknowledging receiving it. If an associate refuses to sign the form the supervisor should note the refusal and send the document to Human Resources for filing.
 2. Associates wishing to attach written comments to the Disciplinary Action Form will be encouraged to do so. Written comment will be included in the associate's Personnel File.
- B. There are four levels of corrective discipline recognized by the County – verbal warning, written reprimand, suspension and termination of employment. In most cases discipline will be progressive, depending upon

the circumstances, so that an associate will be forewarned of the serious consequence for not changing behavior as identified in the disciplinary action. In certain situations the sequence of disciplinary action may not follow in order depending on the severity of the circumstances.

1. Verbal Warning

Counseling is an ongoing management responsibility used to improve an associate's performance. When counseling fails to bring about acceptable performance and the consequences of an associate's continued failure to perform satisfactorily are serious, a manager may issue a verbal warning.

2. Written Reprimand

A written reprimand is a higher level than the verbal warning. A written reprimand should state the offense, the expected appropriate behavior, how the associate had received forewarning of disciplinary action and the consequences of the failure to meet the expected behavior goal.

3. Disciplinary Suspension

Suspension is the most severe form of disciplinary action prior to separation. A suspension is an imposed period of time away from work. Although a suspension may be given for any number of days, the typical suspension is for 3 work days. The days may be imposed consecutively, or over a period of more than one pay period. Suspensions are without pay unless there is an extenuating circumstance.

4. Termination of Employment

Termination is the permanent separation from employment as a disciplinary action. Associates who are terminated from employment with the County as a disciplinary action are not eligible for rehire.

- C. Before issuing any disciplinary action, the department director and/or immediate supervisor should conduct a thorough investigation of the facts and obtain an explanation from the associate being investigated. All findings should be reviewed with the Human Resources Department for consistency. **(Terminations from employment must be reviewed by the Director of Human Resources or designee and the County Administrator before being issued.)** In determining the appropriate level of discipline, the severity of the violation, frequency of the offense, prior discipline and date of last discipline will be taken into consideration.

Approved:

Attest: Chief Clerk

Frank Staudenmeier, Commissioner

Date

Robert S. Carl Jr., Commissioner

Mantura Gallagher, Commissioner

**OFFICIAL SIGNED DOCUMENT IS MAINTAINED IN THE
COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR OFFICE**



Conduct and Disciplinary Action Reporting Form

Employee Name: _____ Department: _____

Date of Warning: _____

Type of Disciplinary Action:

Verbal Warning _____ Written Warning _____ Suspension _____ Termination _____

Description of Event/s

Date of Violation _____ Time _____ Location _____

Full description: (additional pages may be attached if necessary)

Employee comments regarding disciplinary action (additional pages may be attached)

Recommended action:

I have been afforded the opportunity to read this warning and understand the content:

Employee Signature _____ Date _____

Department Head/Supervisors Signature _____ Date _____

Witness' Signature _____ Date _____