

12.00 DISCIPLINE

12.01 GENERAL. Employees of the county serve at will and, within the requirements of state and federal law regarding employment, can be dismissed at any time, with or without notice and for any reason or no reason. Some of the actions that may result in discipline include, but are not limited to the following:

Insubordination;

Absence Without Leave including absence without permission, failure to notify a supervisor of sick leave, and repeated tardiness or early departure;

Endangering the Safety of the Employee and/or Other Persons through negligent or willful acts;

Use of Alcohol or Illegal Drugs while on duty or in a county vehicle;

Involvement with Alcohol or Drugs in the workplace in violation of the county's substance abuse policy;

Unauthorized Use of Public Funds or Property;

Conviction of a felony;

Conviction of Official Misconduct, oppression, or perjury;

Possession of Unauthorized Firearms or Lethal Weapons on the Employees person or in agency vehicles;

Falsification of Documents or Records;

Unauthorized Use of Official Information or unauthorized disclosure of confidential information;

Unauthorized or Abusive Use of Official Authority;

Violation of the County's Sexual Harassment Policy by any county employee;

Incompetence or Neglect of Duty;

Disruptive Behavior which impairs the performances of others; or

Other Violation of any of the Requirements of these Personnel Policies or any other departmental policies not in conflict with these policies.

12.02 PROGRESSIVE DISCIPLINE. An elected or appointed department head may take disciplinary action, including termination, against an employee at any time. The severity of the discipline depends upon the nature of the infraction. The county may, but not necessarily will, use a progressive discipline system.

Progressive discipline typically includes, but is not limited to the following:

Oral Warnings with records of each warning maintained by the appropriate elected official or department head;

Conference with Appointed Official or Department Head, employee, and supervisor, with a written summary of the conference to be prepared by the supervisor, with one copy to the employee and one copy to the employee's personnel file;

Written Reprimands which the employee's supervisor must in all cases cause to be transmitted through the elected official or department head to the employee's personnel file;

Reduction in pay without demotion;

Suspension from duty with or without pay, for up to 30 days and renewable after informal review of the circumstances;

Demotion; and/or

Separation by involuntary dismissal

Actions other than oral or written warnings require the advance approval of the appropriate elected official or department head unless an emergency situation exists.

Except in the case of oral warnings, disciplinary action must be accomplished or preceded by oral or written notice to the employee involved. Notice includes a description of the cause for the action and, except in the case of dismissal, states the likely consequences of further unsatisfactory performance or conduct. Written notice of disciplinary action is included in the employee's personnel file.

Disciplinary action does not automatically or permanently disqualify an employee from consideration for future promotion, pay increases, commendations, or other beneficial official personnel actions.

For additional information regarding procedures to be followed if the discipline results in separation by involuntary dismissal, see the following sections of this manual relating to **Separations**.

In addition to the above policy covering progressive discipline, an offense may be so severe as to warrant immediate discharge without notice. Such instances would be very rare, and any supervisory recommendation for immediate discharge would require the approval of the appropriate elected official or department head. As with other types of discipline or discharge, unless emergency circumstances exist, and in any event must be placed in the employee's personnel file. (See section on Separations for further information on an employee's rights)

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