

Corporate Policies and Procedures			
DEPARTMENT: Human Resources			POLICY #: H-02
POLICY: Discipline and Dismissal			
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POLICY STATEMENT:

The purpose of discipline is correction. It is important to ensure that employees perform their duties in compliance with County of Renfrew rules, directives, regulations, instructions, and policies and procedures, since the objectives of the County cannot be achieved without this acceptance and conformity.

PROCEDURE:

1. Consult the appropriate Union Contract for any deviations to this policy.
2. Review appropriate Corporate Policy.
3. The following apply to the responsibility of the Supervisor:
 - (a) Supervisors are responsible for guiding employees in their behaviour at work;
 - (b) the manner in which guidance is given is all-important. Most individuals conduct themselves properly when they understand exactly what is expected of them. Employees should, therefore, receive clear, unambiguous instructions on the code of behaviour and work performance expected of them;
 - (c) Supervisors are held accountable for the completeness and accuracy of documentation that may be relied upon for discipline. Proper documentation is essential to the process of administering fair and reasonable discipline; and
 - (d) follow-up is important. It is not enough to discipline an employee and “let the case rest.” A systematic and controlled review of job performance is required.
4. The following apply to Disciplinary Techniques:
 - (a) it is essential to give the employee every possible chance to explain his/her actions so that the Supervisor and other investigating officers shall not err because all the facts or circumstances are unknown;

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- (b) there are a number of instances that require discipline of varying degree;
 - (c) one incident may involve more than one infraction;
 - (d) following the doctrine of progressive discipline, the degree of discipline increases with the number of incidents per infraction. The increased degree of discipline is particularly significant if there is a recurrence of incidents involving like or similar misconduct; and,
 - (e) all disciplinary action is recorded so that relevant facts may be substantiated at a later date if necessary.
5. Before an employee is sent a letter of warning, suspension, or dismissal, the Manager/Supervisor speaks to the Department Head and then the Department Head discusses the content of the letter with the Director of Human Resources (or designate). Any questions regarding disciplinary procedures are directed to the Human Resources Department. The Director of Human Resources informs the Chief Administrative Officer/Clerk of all discharges. In the absence of the Director of Human Resources, the matter is referred to the Chief Administrative Officer/Clerk.
 6. Circumstances will present themselves on a daily basis where the role of the supervisor is to coach and assist an employee. Each individual situation must consider all the elements prior to formal discipline. In certain circumstances related to minor infractions employee's can/should receive guidance rather than formal (on personnel file) discipline. When the supervisor exercises this judgement it is recommended a note is kept in his/her day planner or other tool to demonstrate steps taken in coaching.
 7. The following are Types of Discipline:

In all cases of formal discipline, the employee is notified within ten (10) days of the infraction or culminating incident or within ten (10) days of being aware of the incident or longer if the employee is advised that the employer is currently investigating the incident.

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(a) Oral Reprimand:

- (i) a Supervisor may give an oral reprimand to an employee for minor infractions;
- (ii) this reprimand is given in private so that the employee and Supervisor may both benefit from a free interchange of opinion; and,
- (iii) when an oral reprimand (must be documented), rather than a letter of warning is given, the incident is closed and becomes part of the employee's record for information purposes only;

(b) Letter of Warning:

- (i) if it is recommended by a Manager/Supervisor to the Department Head and agreed that a letter of warning is issued, the following must apply:
 - The letter includes a description of the infraction(s); a warning that repetition of the infraction(s) results in more severe disciplinary action; and, in the case of incompetence, a specific time limit during which work is to be brought up to a required standard.
 - If, subject to #5 above, the Supervisor sends the letter of warning in absence of the Department Head, the Department Head is copied and informed immediately upon his/her return.
 - This letter is signed by the Supervisor or Department Head and sent to the employee with copies sent to the Secretary of the applicable Union and to the Director of Human Resources.

(c) Suspension:

- (i) if the infraction(s) is deemed serious by the Supervisor/Manager and the Department Head, then it may be decided to suspend the employee, Human Resources must be consulted;

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- (ii) a letter of suspension is sent to the employee and must include: a description of the infraction(s); a warning that repetition of the infraction(s) results in more severe disciplinary action; in the case of incompetence, a specific time limit during which the employee must bring his/her work up to a required standard; and, the time period that the employee is suspended without pay;
- (iii) the Supervisor or Department Head signs the letter and sends it to the employee, with copies sent to the Secretary of the applicable Union and to the Director of Human Resources;
- (iv) additionally, the employee is given the reason for the suspension in the presence of his/her Steward or Union Official (where applicable); and,
- (v) if, subject to #5 above, the Supervisor signs the letter of warning in absence of the Department Head, the Department Head is informed immediately upon his/her return.

(d) Discharge:

- (i) if the infraction(s) is critical to the operation of the Department, it may be decided to discharge the employee;
- (ii) a letter of discharge is issued promptly to the employee by the Director of Human Resources, subject to #5 above;
- (iii) this letter includes: a description of the infraction(s), a description of disciplinary action taken to date (if applicable), and a notice that the employee is dismissed on a specific date (within a legal time period);
- (iv) this letter is signed by the Director of Human Resources and sent to the employee with copies to the Secretary of the applicable Union and the Department Head; and,

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- (v) the Director of Human Resources (or designate) carries out the discharge.
8. Discipline of Department Heads is processed by the Chief Administrative Officer/Clerk.