

Iowa County, Iowa
Policy Manual

Title: Progressive Discipline	Reference #: HR029
Section: Human Resources	Date Effective/Revised: 7/1/2016
Department (s): All	Approved By: Board of Supervisors

General Conduct

It shall be the duty of all employees to maintain high standards of conduct, cooperation, efficiency and effectiveness in their work. Department heads and supervisors shall organize and direct the work of their units in a manner calculated to achieve these objectives. Whenever the work habits, attitude, production or personal conduct of an employee falls below an acceptable standard, the employee is subject to corrective and/or disciplinary action. All such actions shall be promptly and consistently administered and shall not be on account of political considerations, personal bias, or prejudice.

Letters of clarification shall precede formal discipline whenever, in the judgment of the Department Head, an infraction is readily correctable and is of lesser consequence.

All corrective actions should be thoroughly documented in writing appropriate to the infraction committed, with reasonable time allotted for improvement and subsequent review. Corrections and suggestions should be made in a constructive manner.

Disciplinary Action

Formal disciplinary actions will include verbal warning, written reprimand, suspension, and/or dismissal. It shall be the policy of Iowa County to utilize a system of progressive discipline in addressing an employee's work deficiencies; however, any of the disciplinary measures cited above may be initiated on the more serious first offense.

In most cases, disciplinary action will be issued to the employee by his/her immediate supervisor, or by a higher-level supervisor in the department to which the employee is assigned. Disciplinary action will be issued in a manner which will minimize embarrassment to the employee.

All disciplinary actions will be thoroughly documented in writing appropriate to the infraction committed. The document should be signed by the supervisor or Department Head initiating the action and by the employee. (A copy should then be given to the employee). If the action involves an employee covered by a collective bargaining agreement, said agreement may also require a copy be sent to the appropriate union steward.

Grounds for Disciplinary Action

The seriousness of an offense will often vary with the circumstances prevailing at the time it occurred and the motives which prompted it. Related and mitigating factors will be considered when determining the appropriate action to take. Each of the following infractions may be just cause for disciplinary action, up to and including dismissal. The list presented herein is not intended to be all-inclusive.

1. Unreasonable and/or abusive treatment of a client, citizen, other County employee or individual in the community, including verbal or nonverbal harassment.

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2. Violation of any lawful and reasonable County or departmental policy.
3. Destruction or loss of County property, including abuse of tools, equipment and/or clothing allotments.
4. Absence from duty without permission, proper notice or satisfactory reason.
5. Falsifying records, knowingly giving inaccurate information or unnecessarily withholding information.
6. Obtaining materials or leave time based on fraudulent information; dishonesty; stealing; and other criminal acts.
7. Being under the influence of narcotics, alcohol or other physically impairing or illegal substances on the job.
8. Conviction of a crime involving moral turpitude, casting doubt on the individual's ability to perform his/her County job effectively. (NOTE: Dismissal or non-prosecution for criminal charges shall not, in itself, preclude the County from taking disciplinary action.)
9. Incompetence, ineffectiveness, inefficiency or wastefulness in the performance of assigned duties.
10. Disregard for safety policies, procedures, reporting requirements, and/or proper use of safety equipment.
11. An attendance record which demonstrates a consistent or continual lack of availability for work to the extent that ineffectiveness or inefficiency of services results.
12. Misuse or unauthorized disclosure of confidential information including protected health information (PHI).
13. Actions, attitudes, or behaviors which adversely affect department operations, citizens, patients, or others.

Administrative Procedures

The Department Head or elected official may elect to place an employee on investigative leave before making any determination of corrective or disciplinary action.

Cooperation in Investigations

1. All employees are required to fully cooperate with any representative of the County who is conducting a work-related investigation. Employees will be disciplined for lying to any

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representative of the County, or providing information to any representative of the County which is dishonest, misleading, inaccurate, or incomplete.

2. Employees will also be disciplined for impeding, obstructing, or failing to cooperate with an inquiry or investigation conducted by any representative of the County. “Obstructing” includes, but is not limited to, threatening, intimidating, or coercing other individuals who may be contacted by a representative of the County, and discouraging other individuals who may be contacted by a representative of the County from responding to or cooperating with the County. “Failing to cooperate” includes, but is not limited to, failing to provide information, documents, or materials requested by a representative of the County, and providing information, documents, or materials to a representative of the County which are dishonest, misleading, inaccurate, or incomplete.