

PROGRESSIVE DISCIPLINE OF STAFF AND ADMINISTRATORS WHO HAVE ACHIEVED REGULAR EMPLOYMENT STATUS

POLICY STATEMENT

This policy provides guidelines for effecting corrective action when, in the judgment of the dean or director and supervisor, a Staff or Administrative employee who has achieved regular employment status displays substandard performance and/or behavior problems.

REASON FOR THE POLICY

This policy communicates guidelines for the imposition of corrective action for performance and/or behavior transgressions.

This policy is not intended to and does not alter the University's at-will employment relationship with its employees. Employment at Chapman University is for no specified term and is subject to the mutual consent of the University and the employee. Either party may terminate the employment relationship at will, at any time, with or without cause. The above steps contained in this policy shall not limit the University's right to terminate an employee at any time. Further, the University in its sole discretion, reserves the right to impose whatever disciplinary sanction it deems appropriate at any time or in any sequence.

POLICY

This policy applies to staff and administrative employees who occupy positions other than "temporary" and have achieved regular employment status. Refer to the policy on Recruitment and Hiring for Staff and Administrator Positions for staff and administrators who are in the Section 2.3.2 for employees who are in the Introductory Period of Employment. Refer to paragraph D.3. below in this policy, for employees in temporary positions. Temporary employees have a brief and transitory employment relationship with the University. Therefore, employees who occupy temporary positions are terminated if and when the University determines that their performance or behavior is not adequate or that their services no longer are needed, so long as termination does not violate federal or state laws.

The purposes of progressive discipline are to:

- 1) Promote positive employee relations by encouraging communication between supervisor and employee where the employee's performance or behavior is considered unsatisfactory.
- 2) Provide information which enables the employee to make a self-directed decision regarding his or her employment.
- 3) Provide the employee with advance knowledge of the corrective action which may result from unsatisfactory work performance and/or behavior.

Investigatory Suspension

The supervisor may, under some circumstances, remove the employee from the workplace and place the employee on a paid or unpaid leave of absence during a period of review or investigation. Approval of the dean or director and the Human Resources Director (or their designees) is required prior to placing an employee on a paid or unpaid investigatory suspension.

Authority and Responsibility

Before formal corrective action is taken, the dean or director (or their designees) and supervisor shall discuss the matter with a Human Resources staff member. However, it is recognized that certain exceptional situations may require immediate corrective action (for example, where the safety of employees or University resources is an issue). In these situations the dean or director shall discuss the matter with Human Resources as soon as possible after the corrective action is taken.

Deans or directors (or their designees) and supervisors shall consult with Human Resources staff in the early stages of performance or behavior problems. Human Resources will provide guidance in resolving performance, behavior and/or communications problems, and in determining what discipline is appropriate to the situation at hand.

Steps

The following actions, shown in order of severity, may be taken:

1. Counseling the employee on job standards and expectations (pre-discipline);
2. Verbal warning;
3. Written warning;
4. Disciplinary probation;
5. Disciplinary demotion;
6. Suspension without pay;
7. Termination.

Discipline ideally begins with less severe and, if not resolved, progresses to more severe actions. However, the University may initiate any of the above disciplinary actions in any order if, in its opinion, circumstances so warrant.

Nothing in this policy shall be construed to limit the right of the University to terminate employment without cause and without advance warning.

Termination of Employment for Substandard Performance or Behavior

The purpose of this section is to address the circumstances which may result in termination of employment of any employee classified as Staff or Administrator.

All employees, including employees in their Introductory Period of Employment and employees

who occupy temporary positions, are expected to meet acceptable standards of performance. Failure to meet such standards may result in termination of employment. The following is a partial list of infractions or performance problems which may result in disciplinary action up to and including termination. It is impossible to identify every situation or condition which may result in termination of employment. Therefore, this list is for illustrative purposes only.

1. Falsification of credentials or experience in securing employment.
2. Professional misconduct or dishonesty.
3. Harassing, threatening, intimidating or coercing any co-worker or student.
4. Absence without proper notification or authorization.
5. Any actions which endanger the health or well-being of co-workers or students, or any other actions which represent serious deviations from generally accepted norms of employee behavior.
6. Substance abuse or related practices.
7. A pattern of neglect or refusal of reasonable and normal job-related obligations.
8. Mishandling, misappropriation or unauthorized removal or possession of the funds and/or property of the University.
9. Other reasons may be specifically noted in Chapman policies.

Employees (other than temporary employees and employees in their introductory periods of employment) who feel that a termination for any of the above reasons from the University has been unwarranted may avail themselves of the process outlined in the Grievance Policy.

OFFICE RESPONSIBLE FOR POLICY

Human Resources

Contact information for questions about this policy:

Michael Nee, nee@chapman.edu , (714) 997-6924

WEBSITE ADDRESS FOR THIS POLICY

https://www.chapman.edu/faculty-staff/human-resources/_files/policies/staff-progressive-discipline-policy.pdf

APPROVAL AND PUBLICATION DATES

Effective : (Date of publication)

This policy was published in June 1998 as part of the Staff and Administrative Handbook, sections of which were amended in March 2017. In March 2021 the sections of the handbook were separated into policies, with no substantive change in content.

RELATED MATERIALS

N/A