



Grant County, Washington Policies & Procedures

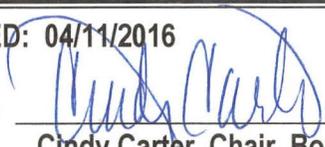
POLICY NUMBER 1300

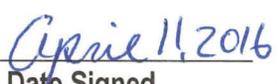
DISCIPLINE/CORRECTIVE ACTION

DATE ISSUED: 04/11/2016

EFFECTIVE DATE: 04/11/2016

APPROVED:


Cindy Carter, Chair, Board of County Commissioners


Date Signed

LAST REVISED: 03/15/2016

CONTACT: Human Resources

POLICY NUMBER 1300, DISCIPLINE/CORRECTIVE ACTION

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Section	Discipline/Corrective Action Sections	Page #
1301	Purpose	1300-2
1302	At Will Status	1300-2
1303	Responsibilities of Employees	1300-2
1304	Responsibilities of Supervisors, Managers and Directors	1300-2
1305	Responsibilities of Human Resources Department	1300-2
1306	The Steps of Progressive Discipline	1300-2
1307	Coaching & Counseling	1300-3
1308	1 st Warning / 1 st Level	1300-3
1309	2 nd Warning / 2 nd Level	1300-4
1310	Suspension Without Pay	1300-4
1311	Discharge From Employment	1300-4
1312	Additional Information	1300-4
	1312.1 Predetermination Meeting	1300-4
	1312.2 Paid Administrative Leave	1300-5
	1312.3 Performance Improvement Plans	1300-5
	1312.4 Name-Clearing Hearings	1300-5

1301 – Purpose

Grant County's discipline/corrective action policy and procedures are designed to provide a structured corrective action process to improve and prevent a recurrence of undesirable employee behavior and performance issues.

1302 – At Will Status

Employment with Grant County is at will (see Policy 200, Section 202). Nothing in this section shall be construed to create an employment contract, nor shall it be construed to alter the fact that employment is at will.

1303 – Responsibilities of Employees

It is the responsibility of every Grant County employee to be aware of and abide by existing policies and work rules. Work rules and regulations may not necessarily be provided in writing. It is also the responsibility of employees to perform their duties to the best of their ability and to the standards set forth in their job descriptions and/or as otherwise established.

1304 – Responsibilities of Supervisors, Managers, and Directors

It is the responsibility of every Grant County immediate supervisor, manager or director to hold employees accountable for performance and workplace behavior. Expectations should be clearly and consistently communicated to employees. If necessary, corrective measures should be approached in an objective manner.

1305 – Responsibilities of Human Resource Department

It is the responsibility of the Human Resources department to oversee all aspects of the discipline/corrective action process to ensure compliance with policy, employment law, and collective bargaining agreements.

1306 – The Steps of Progressive Discipline

1306.1 Outlined below are the steps of Grant County's progressive discipline policy and procedure:

- Coaching & Counseling
- 1st Warning / 1st Level
- 2nd Warning / 2nd Level
- Suspension without Pay
- Discharge from Employment

1306.2 Grant County reserves the right to apply the steps of progressive discipline in the order and manner which best addresses the situation.

1306.2.1 Steps may be combined or skipped based on the facts of each situation and the nature of the offense.

1306.2.2 An employee may be discharged for a single occurrence of behavior or violation of policy without having been previously warned or reprimanded, depending upon the severity of the offense.

1306.2.3 Some of the factors that will be considered are whether the offense is repeated despite coaching, counseling or training, the employee's work record, and the impact the conduct and performance issues have on the organization.

1306.3 This process should not restrict the opportunity for less formal communication with supervisors. Grant County encourages open dialogue regarding all issues and concerns between employees and their immediate supervisor.

1306.4 In certain cases where it is necessary and appropriate to remove an employee from the workplace pending discipline and/or to conduct an investigation, the employee may be placed on Administrative Leave with or without pay. This shall be reviewed by the Human Resources department prior to implementation.

1307 – Coaching & Counseling

Coaching and counseling is non-disciplinary, informal interactions intended to communicate expectations, performance levels, and/or behavioral concerns. Such counseling is documented and is included in the employee's personnel file.

1308 – 1st Warning / 1st Level

A warning is a formal notice provided to the employee. Warnings are documented in writing and placed in employee's personnel file. Employees shall sign warnings as evidence only of having received the warning. Warnings shall include an explanation of the violation or problem and request for corrective action required of the employee. Written warnings should include the following:

- Statement of the facts;
- Statement of discipline administered;
- Corrective action required of the employee;
- Definite period during which the employee must clearly demonstrate improvement;
- Statement of further potential corrective action to be taken if corrective action is not achieved; and
- Employee's comments and acknowledgement of receipt of discipline.

1309 – 2nd Warning / 2nd Level

A “Level 2” warning indicates that a future incident of the issues discussed will progress to a higher level of discipline without further warning. The content and structure of this level of warning is identical to a “Level 1” warning.

1310 – Suspension Without Pay

Suspension without pay is an involuntary period of unpaid leave imposed for disciplinary reasons. Documentation of suspensions are to be signed by the employee and placed in the employee’s personnel file. The number of days of suspension is dependent on the nature of the violation and the employee’s record. In the case of Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA) exempt employees, the suspension without pay shall not be less than one (1) week. Employees serving a suspension shall not be employable with any other County office, department or funded organization during the suspension. Written documentation of suspensions should generally follow the outline provided for written warnings with the addition of a statement that it is a “final warning” and that the employee will be discharged upon the occurrence of any other violation/infraction.

1311 – Discharge From Employment

Discharge is involuntary termination of employment. Employment at Grant County is at will. The County retains the right to discharge an employee’s employment at any time, for any reason or no reason and with or without notice. Written documentation of discharge may include the reason(s) for the discharge but not necessarily because employment is at will. Prior to discharge being implemented, the Human Resources department shall review the matter.

1312 – Additional Information

1312.1 Predetermination Meeting. Prior to issuing discipline, the department will normally schedule and hold a Predetermination meeting. This allows the employee the opportunity to fully understand and consider the offense being discussed and to actively influence the determination of action. At the meeting, the department delineates its reasons for considering discipline. The employee is given time to present evidence to address the department’s points.

1312.1.1 Grant County reserves the right to forgo the predetermination process in situations in which the facts of the offense are clear and indisputable and when termination is without cause. Waiving the predetermination process must be approved by the Human Resources department.

1312.1.2 Notice of a scheduled Predetermination meeting will be made in writing to the employee at least 24 hours in advance. The notice will contain a description of the alleged offense(s) and concern(s) to be discussed and considered.

- 1312.1.3 Upon completion of the meeting, the department, in consultation with Human Resources, will issue a written decision of what level of discipline, if any, is appropriate to the situation.
- 1312.1.4 Employees holding positions under a collective bargaining agreement have the right to union representation during the meeting.
- 1312.1.5 The Predetermination meeting will be conducted under the direction of the Human Resources department.
- 1312.2 Paid Administrative Leave. In certain cases where it is necessary and appropriate to remove an employee from the workplace pending discipline and/or to conduct an investigation, the employee may be placed on Administrative Leave with or without pay. This shall be reviewed by the Human Resources department prior to implementation.
- 1312.3 Performance Improvement Plans. The department may choose, in conjunction with any step of the progressive discipline process, to implement a performance improvement plan in instances in which it is viewed that the employee would benefit from a clearly outlined plan of action in order to improve performance. The plan will include a clear description of: the performance improvements needed, the steps required for improvement, the expected outcome; the process for interim review, and a final determination date.
- 1312.4 Name-Clearing Hearings. If Grant County has publicly announced the grounds for the employee's discipline or discharge, it will provide the employee with the opportunity for a "name clearing hearing". A name-clearing hearing allows the employee to refute statements or documentation that he or she may view as false or stigmatizing.
- 1312.4.1 The employee must request a name-clearing hearing in writing to the Human Resources department within ten (10) working days following the date of the public announcement.