



Coaching & Progressive Discipline Procedure No. 13.131

District of Lake Country
10150 Bottom Wood Lake Road
Lake Country, BC V4V 2M1
t: 250-766-5650 f: 250-766-0116
lakecountry.bc.ca

Date

The following was approved as an Administrative Policy on March 28, 2013.

Purpose

- Progressive discipline is a process for dealing with job-related behaviour that does not meet expected and communicated performance standards. The primary purpose for progressive discipline is to assist the employee to understand that a performance problem or opportunity for improvement exists.
- The District of Lake Country believes in a proactive approach to improving employee performance where we consider positive coaching as a significant tool to use prior to the implementation of discipline.

Policy

The District acknowledges the importance of actively promoting and supporting appropriate and positive employee behaviours that contribute to and sustain a safe, inclusive, and accepting learning environment in which every employee can reach his or her full potential.

Employees' performance and conduct should contribute to the achievement of the organization's goals and objectives. When employees' conduct or performance is unsatisfactory or fails to meet the employer's expectations, corrective action may be taken using progressive discipline. Serious offences may result in immediate suspension or termination.

Procedures

STEPS OF PROGRESSIVE DISCIPLINE

Although each case must be assessed individually to determine the frequency, severity and/or nature of the issue/concern and the stage at which the discipline will be initiated, the required steps of progressive discipline are described below. Where a beginning point or next step is in question, the direct supervisor, department head and Human Resources, in collaboration, will determine direction.

COACHING

- To be conducted in a "low key" manner privately. It is to identify a problem and identify a solution to the problem.
- This is also an opportunity to get input from the employee about the cause of the problem and an opportunity for the supervisor to clarify the employee's understanding of expectations concerning the situation.

- The purpose of this discussion is to alleviate any misunderstandings and clarify the direction for necessary and successful correction. Most "discipline" problems are solved at this stage.
- Human Resources is not required at this stage however may be involved for advisory purposes.

LETTER OF EXPECTATION

If informal coaching fails to succeed in the improvement of performance or behaviour, the direct supervisor will document a formal letter which will clearly define the expectations set out from the previous coaching. This will be the step between Coaching and Discipline giving the employee clearly defined information on areas of improvement. The purpose is to formally identify and clarify expected behaviour in performance of job duties or attitude in the workplace. The direct supervisor will work with the employee in this case to come up with an improvement plan along with clear timelines for expected results.

VERBAL WARNING

In the case of a relatively minor infraction, employees should be given a verbal warning. This discussion occurs between the direct supervisor and the employee as soon as possible after the infraction and subsequent investigation have occurred. The supervisor should proceed as follows:

- Provide the employee with the opportunity to have union representation of any meeting that may involve possible disciplinary action (if non-exempt).
- The supervisor must have an exempt supervisor/manager or Human Resources Advisor accompany him/her at the meeting.
- The meeting serves as a basis for discussion, clarification and validation of the concerns and/or expectations. Because new information may be presented at the meeting, it is important that a verbal warning not be given until the conclusion of the meeting, if necessary, and that the letter (written confirmation in writing) not be drafted until after the meeting has occurred. At the conclusion of the meeting, if the supervisor is considering disciplinary action, the employee must be informed of this and that written confirmation will be forthcoming.
- After the meeting, and once all the facts are known, a letter will be prepared by Human Resources and returned to the supervisor and employee for signature.

WRITTEN WARNING

Initiate this step by repeating the process used in the verbal warning procedures before preparing any written action.

- After this discussion, prepare the written warning. Build in information, responses, and commitments made in the discussion.
- The written warning will have three parts:
 - A statement about the past, reviewing the employee's history with respect to the problem.
 - A statement about the present, describing the who, what, when, etc. of the current situation, including the employee's explanation.
 - A statement of the future, describing your expectations and the consequences of continued failure. (Include an Improvement Plan if required)

SUSPENSION

With the exception of significant inappropriate behaviour infractions, suspensions are normally only given after the verbal and written warnings have failed to produce the necessary change in behaviour within a reasonable period of time. The suspension is to be without pay. If a supervisor recommends suspension of an employee, they must contact the CAO and Human Resources, prior to proceeding.

A meeting with the employee would occur in accordance with the other steps of discipline.

- Consult with the CAO and Human Resources Advisor regarding the preparation of a letter confirming the suspension of an employee.
- Prepare the letter as soon as possible following the meeting. The letter must include:
 - confirmation of the meeting date/time and who attended
 - identification of the event or behaviour (i.e. date/time/place)
 - reference to all related prior recorded disciplinary action
 - that this behaviour warrants discipline in the form of a suspension
 - date(s) of the suspension; date of return to work
 - conditions of return to work, if any
 - warning that “future incidents of this nature may lead to further discipline, up to and including dismissal”

Drafts of all letters must be approved by Human Resources prior to release to the employee.

TERMINATION

This is the last step of any progressive discipline system and is used when earlier steps have not produced the needed results.

- A discussion with the employee must occur before a final determination is reached. Inform the employee about the nature of the problem. See sequence described previously.
- The employee must be given an opportunity to explain his or her action and to provide information.
- If the employee takes this opportunity, it must be investigated where appropriate and give consideration to the information provided.
- A written notice of termination is prepared after the discussion and consideration of all available information.

As per the Collective Agreement under Article 13, in any disciplinary matter, the Employer will not refer to events in an employee’s personnel file following thirty-six (36) months without a similar infraction. The District’s Discipline Procedure upholds progressive discipline for up to 36 months of consecutive employment to help support employee improvement through discipline process. Progressive Discipline will remain on file and active if an employee is off work for vacation or sick leaves where sick hours are available. Once an employee is on a leave of absence then accumulation of the 36 months will not continue until such time as the employee returns to work. Discipline will remain on file for the same time frame for exempt staff and the same rules as above apply.

Original signed by Alberto De Feo

Alberto De Feo, CAO

28.03.2013

Date