

Chapter 7 – DISCIPLINARY PROCEDURES

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7.1 Foreword

To protect employees from injury or illness, all employees, from line staff and contractors to executive managers, must follow workplace safety policies and procedures. In situations where an employee does not follow safety and compliance procedures, it may be necessary to impose disciplinary action to improve the employee's performance. All County personnel are subject to this chapter.

7.2 Introduction

Progressive discipline is a constructive tool to improve employee performance and is designed to accomplish three main objectives:

- To create a safe working environment for all employees and the public we serve.
- To assure all employees from lowest level staff to highest level managers meet their responsibilities to follow established safety and compliance policies and procedures.
- To establish safe work practices in all work areas with a flexible disciplinary response that is commensurate with the infraction.

7.3 Disciplinary-Related Policies

Because of the potential risks to the employee and their co-workers, and liability to the County when safety and compliance policies and procedures are not followed, managers will consider the following alternatives:

- Counseling the employee or providing additional training.
- Documenting the level of performance in the employee's personnel file and setting performance expectations in writing as part of the duty statement. Follow-up monitoring of the employee's performance related to safety and compliance responsibilities.
- Suspension.
- Permanent demotion or termination.

Each alternative does not necessarily follow the other, nor is the manager or supervisor expected to counsel the employee in all situations. Managers are responsible to equally enforce all safety and compliance policies and should be evaluated as to their effectiveness in meeting this responsibility. Evaluations and personnel actions will consider the employee's record of following existing safety and compliance policies and general safe working habits. Periodic performance reviews will define the level of performance expected of the employee relative to safety and compliance.

For more information, contact the Occupational Safety and Environmental Compliance Unit (OSEC) by phone 408-441-4280. Updated contact information can be found on the Santa Clara County, OSEC website.