


WASHINGTON STATE UNIVERSITY



**Corrective Action and Discipline**

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Presented by:  
Human Resource Services

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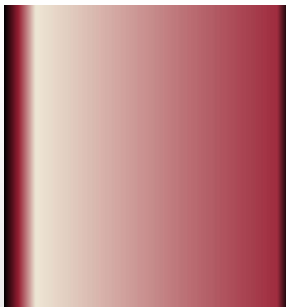
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**Objectives**

Overview of Policies and Procedures

- Corrective Action Process
- Disciplinary Process



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Is there a need for **CORRECTIVE ACTION** in the workplace? Why or Why not?

What is the difference between **CORRECTIVE ACTION** and **DISCIPLINARY ACTION**?



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**Corrective Actions Are . . .**

Preventative measures taken

- to promote compliance with established agency rules and expectations;
- to change unacceptable behavior.




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**Benefits of Corrective Action**

- Communication
- Provides Opportunity to Adjust
- Accountability
- Standardizes Process




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**Disciplinary Actions are . . .**

Formal, pay affecting actions, taken when either

- corrective measures fail to correct problem OR
- seriousness of offense warrants more formal measures

Imposed only by **appointing authority**  
*(per BPPM 60.10. See HRS webpage to find out who the AA for your area is)*




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### Progressive

- Typically, both corrective and disciplinary actions are “*progressive*” -- starting at the lowest level, and then progressing up the steps.
- However, this depends on the specifics of each case



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### Progression of Corrective Action




Letter of Reprimand

Letter of Concern

Notice of Counseling

Verbal Counseling w/summary of meeting

Verbal Counseling



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### Progression of Disciplinary Action *(Appointing Authority)*




Dismissal

Demotion

Reduction in Pay

Suspension (1-15 days)

Pre-Disciplinary Notice



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**Identifying a Performance Deficiency**

**Review the following:**

- Position description, goals and expectations
  - Are they current and accurate?
- Last Performance Reviews or Annual Review
- Did the employee receive previous corrective actions?
- Did the employee receive previous discipline?
- Applicable policies and/or procedures - university and departmental:
  - Was it communicated to staff?
  - How was it communicated?




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**Addressing Performance Issues**

- Determine who will meet with employee.
  - Immediate supervisor
  - You and Director/Chair
  - You and immediate supervisor
- Consider setting and location
- State concerns and issues clearly
  - Reminder: Do not state to the employee that this is a HRS meeting or a HRS imposed meeting.
- Focus on behavior, not person
- Indicate seriousness of problem
- Clarify expectations




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**Clear Rules & Guidelines**

**Are more effective when they are:**

- Needed
- Communicated
- Understood
- Written/Recorded
- Applied equally
- Enforced




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**Department Expectations**

Typical examples of department expectations:

- Hours of work
- Overtime rules
- Dress Code
- Requesting annual leave
- Call-in procedures for sick leave



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**Examples**

Your employee Jane Doe Smith is the receptionist for the department. Her work schedule is 8 am to 5 pm. For the last month she arrives to work around 8:15 am at least 1-day per week.

How would you address the situation?



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**Examples**

Your employee Jane Doe Smith continues to be late to work. She is now taking longer breaks and extending her lunch period.

How would you handle this situation?



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**The Wrong Way to Document...**

On June 5, met with Joe Adams, verbally counseled about improper behavior.

As written - will you remember the "behavior"?



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**The Right way...**

On June 5, Joe Adams was verbally warned about his inability to meet deadlines and failure to come into work at his designated start time(s) on dates(s).



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**Another Wrong Way ...**

Joe Adams is unable to do his job.

How would you correct this note?



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**The Right Way...**

Joe Adams did not complete [Name] project by the established deadline of [date] and has been late to work by more then 15 minutes on [date, date and date].




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**Employee Situation**

This month, your employee John Jones has been absent every week on Friday and/or Monday and late for work without calling in to you six times.

- Last month you issued him a Notice of Counseling for similar behavior.
- How would you handle this situation?




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**During a Corrective Action Meeting**

Let the employee respond

- Listen
- Don't Interrupt
- Don't lose your temper
- Don't argue

Consider/Reconsider course of action based on employee input




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**Tips**

- Apply corrective consistently, fairly and impartially
- Set a good example
- Don't "save up" concerns
- Praise in public—criticize in private
- Contact HRS for guidance



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**Things to be Aware of...**

- Notice of Investigation
- Timeliness
- Double Discipline
- Due Process
- Union Contract



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**Notice of Investigation**

- Depending on the issue/situation a *Notice of Investigation (NOI)* may be appropriate to give.
- Bargaining unit covered employees must receive a written NOI within 10 working days from the date the supervisor or manager becomes aware of the situation.



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**More...**

**Samples of Investigations:**

- Allegations of inappropriate use of state resources
- Allegation of workplace violence
- Office for Equal Opportunity (OEO): Allegation of harassment or discrimination



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**Double Discipline**

- Cannot discipline for conduct which was previously addressed as corrective action (verbal or written).



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**Considering Disciplinary Action**

- Contact HRS for guidance
- Issue a Pre-Disciplinary Notice
- Schedule a Pre-Disciplinary Meeting
- Appointing Authority should attend meeting
- HRS attends the meeting



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**Examples**

Employee John Smith over the past month has been consistently late for work and on two separate occasions was a no-call no-show.

How would you handle this situation?




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**Pre-Disciplinary Meeting**

- This is the Employee's meeting
- Employee is allowed to have a union representative or co-worker attend
- Meeting is voluntary, employee can respond in writing or not attend
- After the meeting, the Appointing Authority makes decision, taking into consideration employee's input




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**Considerations**

- Does the proposed discipline fit the violation?
- Is the proposed discipline likely to correct behavior?
- Review prior performance issues
- Review performance evaluations
- Extenuating circumstances
- Seriousness of the offense




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**Disciplinary Action Letter**

- Action is decided **AFTER** employee has had the *opportunity* to respond
- If disciplinary action is decided, the appointing authority notifies employee in writing of action.
- HRS drafts the letters.



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**How Would You Handle...**

Your employee walks off the job without permission:

The employee requests use of annual leave the next day to cover time missed.

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Should you approve use of annual leave?



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**More...**

You send your employee home due to inappropriate behavior:

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Are you required to pay the employee?



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**More...**

You gave your employee a pre-disciplinary notice.

- Employee calls in sick the next day, completes Family Medical Leave (FML) paperwork and is approved.

What happens to the pre-disciplinary process?



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**Memo & Letter Templates**

- HR Consultants are available to provide guidance with employee issues including verbal counseling, and writing corrective action memos or letters.
- HRS and the appointing authority draft disciplinary action letters.
- Web resources are also available in the Managers Section at [www.hrs.wsu.edu](http://www.hrs.wsu.edu)



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**Probationary & Trial Service**

- Probationary Employees
  - Performance concerns
    - Previously discussed – behavior continues
  - Requires 1 day written notice (WAC 357-46)
  - Template of notification letter on HRS website
- Trial Service Employees
  - Recommended that employee is notified of deficiency AND allowed a reasonable amount of time for improvement before reversion
  - Requires 7 calendar days written notice for civil service, 15 calendar days for BU



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**Question...**

- What are the possible implications of an employee not performing at highest standards passing a probationary or trial service period?




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**Resources**

- WAC 357-37, 38
- Collective Bargaining Unit Agreements
- HRS Website – [hrs.wsu.edu](http://hrs.wsu.edu)
  - Corrective/ Discipline Guide

*For assistance and answers to questions contact HRS at 335-4521, or [hrs@wsu.edu](mailto:hrs@wsu.edu)*

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WASHINGTON STATE UNIVERSITY



**This has been a WSU Training Videoconference**

If you attended this live training session and wish to have your attendance documented in your training history, please notify Human Resource Services within 24 hours of today's date:

**[hrstraining@wsu.edu](mailto:hrstraining@wsu.edu)**

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