

PROGRESSIVE DISCIPLINE

Employee's Manual



Hondo Independent School District

2017-2018

Progressive Discipline Defined

What progressive discipline is?

- Progressive discipline is a tool that will help encourage an employee to modify their behavior or performance to acceptable standards.
- Progressive discipline provides the Department with a uniform model to deal with employee counseling, discipline, and documentation.
- Progressive discipline is an opportunity to encourage the employee to correct behavioral deficiencies.
- As a result of the uniformity of the progressive discipline plan, the employee conduct will be corrected and the need to hire and retrain new employees will be reduced.

What progressive discipline is not?

- Progressive discipline is NOT to be used as a tool to harass, intimidate, or punish the employee.
- Progressive discipline is NOT a means to force the employee to resign.

Basic Principles of Progressive Discipline

- **Maintain constructive relationships.**
 - The best work comes about when co-workers support one another's efforts. This does not mean that you need to be "close friends" with everyone you deal with at work; however, your work interactions will go smoother if you approach everyone with a positive attitude and communicate support and confidence in the other person's ability. By sharing information, acknowledging problems, and sorting out conflicts early on, you create strong relationships based on mutual trust and respect.

"Communicate, communicate, communicate"

- **Focus on the situation, issue, behavior; not the person.**
 - Blaming people does not solve any problems. Focusing on the situation, issue or behavior will help you remain objective when faced with challenges. You will solve problems more effectively, make better decisions, and maintain constructive relationships with your co-workers when you look at the big picture and consider other's point of view with an open mind.

“Person vs. Problem”

- **Maintain the self-confidence and self-esteem of others.**
 - When people feel free to express their ideas without fear of ridicule or personal criticism, they are more willing to take risks and stretch their capabilities. By showing respect for others and recognize the contributions of co-workers, you give people the self-confidence, to share their ideas openly, the take risks, and to ask for feedback and help in expanding their knowledge and skills on the job.

“Treat others as you would want to be treated.”

- **Take initiative to make things better.**
 - By surveying your own area and finding improvement opportunities, you not only increase the organization's chances for success – you also increase your personal satisfaction by taking control of your work and creating visible improvement. Initiative follows naturally when you stay informed and alert to change, focus on ways to avoid similar problems in the future, and expect to find solutions to the problems you face now.

“Go for it!”

- **Lead by example.**
 - As organizations face new challenges, everyone is expected to be a leader. Being a good leader means setting a good example. Modeling the kind of behavior you want to see in others is the surest way to influence them. By actively honoring your commitments, admitting your mistakes, and staying receptive to new ideas, you will motivate others to do the same.

“Model what you expect.”

Employee Conference

- **A conference will be conducted as soon as possible after the violation.**
- **Discussion will be in private.**

Levels of Discipline

All behavior or performance issues that warrant a formal level of discipline will fall into one of 3 categories: Level I Discipline, Level II Discipline, and Level III Discipline. The discipline steps used will be based on the severity of the violations.

Level I Discipline:

Level I violations are minor in nature and cause little disruption in the workplace. The progression of discipline in Level I is as follows:

- Verbal Warning
- Written Warning
- Suspension
- Termination

Level II Discipline:

Level II violations are serious in nature and cause some disruption in the workplace. The written warning violations are typically the same as the verbal warning violations except they are repeated violations. The progression of discipline in Level II is as follows:

- Written Warning
- Suspension
- Termination

Level III Discipline:

Level III violations are very serious in nature and cause substantial disruption in the workplace. The progression of discipline in Level III is as follows:

- Termination or Suspension
- Termination

Note: Level III violations usually result in termination, but if the circumstances are extraordinary, a suspension may be given instead of termination.

Discipline Level Table

	Level I	Level II	Level III
First Violation	Verbal Warning	Written Warning or Suspension	Suspension or Termination
Second Violation	Written Warning	Suspension or Termination	Termination
Third Violation	Suspension	Termination	
Fourth Violation	Termination		

Note: Table shows which discipline step to use under the various discipline levels.

Violations That Would Require Verbal and Written Warning

Verbal warning is given when a Level I violation has occurred. The written warning violations are the same as the verbal warning violations except they are repeated violations. Listed below is a partial list of violations that warrant either a verbal or written violation.

- Failure to call in absence
- Chronic tardiness
- Unexcused absences from scheduled staff meetings
- Making preparations to quit work before the appointed time
- Leaving the assigned work area without authorization
- Staying late or leaving early without following the proper procedures
- Prolonged or excessive breaks
- Interfering with the work of others
- Malicious mischief, horseplay, wrestling or other misconduct
- Unnecessary shouting or disruption
- Neglect of work, avoiding work or working too slowly
- Careless use of District property
- Unsatisfactory work or failure to maintain required standard of performance
- Use or possession of another employee's equipment without permission
- Poor housekeeping in work area
- Contributing to or creating an unsafe work area
- Failure to follow safety rules or procedures
- Failure to work cooperatively with other employees
- Failure to comply with directives
- Speeding or other minor violations while operating a motor vehicle on District business

- Dressing inappropriately for work assignment

The Verbal Warning

Below is a checklist for the verbal warning:

- Inform the employee that they are receiving a verbal warning and the reason for the warning.
- Tell the employee in specific and clear terms what is the behavior or performance issue.
- Clearly explain what behavior or performance issues need to be corrected.
- Inform the employee of the consequences if the behavior is not corrected (written warning)
- Express your confidence in the employee's ability to correct the issue without any further disciplinary action.
- Fill out the Verbal Warning form and have yourself and the employee sign the document.
- Give the employee a copy and put the original in your file on the employee.

The Written Warning

Below is a checklist for the written warning:

- Contact area supervisor to determine that written warning is warranted.
- Arrange a conference with the area supervisor, employee and yourself.
- Inform the employee that they are receiving a written warning and the reason for the warning.
- Tell the employee in specific and clear terms what is the behavior or performance issue.
- Discuss the reasons why the employee has not been able to correct their performance or behavior.
- Clearly explain what behavior or performance issues need to be corrected.
- Inform the employee of the consequences if the behavior is not corrected (suspension)
- Express your confidence in the employee's ability to correct the issue without any further disciplinary action.
- Schedule a follow-up meeting with the employee.
- Fill out the Employee Disciplinary Report completely; specifying written warning and have you and the employee sign the document.

- ❑ Give the employee a copy, keep a copy in your file, and send the original to the Director of the Department.

Violations That Would Require Recommendation For Suspension

Below is a partial list of violations that will result in suspension.

- Disobeying orders of a supervisor
- Disorderly conduct
- Discourteous treatment toward the public and staff.
- Reporting for work or working while unfit for duty which includes mental or physical condition and physical appearance
- Use of tobacco or alcoholic products while on District property
- Creating a hostile work place
- Sleeping during work hours
- Willful disregard of District rules, regulations, policies or procedures
- Negligence resulting in damage to a District vehicle or a person while on District business
- Use of profane or abusive language
- Malicious mischief, horseplay, wrestling or other misconduct
- Repeated absences that disrupt service to other employees
- Refusal to work at assigned location

Suspension may be given if the employee did not correct a performance issue after a written warning was given or if the issue falls under a level two of higher violation.

Upon approval for suspension from the Human Resources Department, the duration of the suspension is to be without pay. During this time frame the employee shall reflect on the reasons for the suspension and decide whether or not they are willing to return to work and correct the behavior or performance issue.

Below is a check list for suspension.

- ❑ Consult with Director of Department and review previous documentation
- ❑ Director of Department will contact Human Resources to get approval to suspend
- ❑ Director of Department will facilitate a meeting with employee and their immediate supervisor to inform the employee that they are being suspended; give clear and specific terms as to why they are being suspended
- ❑ Inform the employee of the consequences if the behavior is not corrected (termination)
- ❑ Fill out the Employee Disciplinary Report completely, specifying suspension and have the area supervisor, supervisor, and the employee sign the document, then send to HR for signature

- ❑ After HR has signed, they will send copies to the employee, the supervisor, and the Director of Department in order to place in employee file
- ❑ Schedule a meeting with the employee upon their return to discuss what decision they have made regarding their behavior

Violations That Would Require Recommendation For Termination

Below is a partial list of violations that will result in termination.

- Sexual Harassment
- Failure to maintain required licenses or registration
- Possession of a firearm or weapon on District property
- Insubordination by refusing to perform assigned work or comply with written or verbal instructions of supervisor
- Willful neglect of duties
- Failure to report to work or notify supervisor of absence for three consecutive days
- Instigating or participating in any illegal walkout, strike, sit-down, refusal to return to work
- Gambling during work hours
- Possessing, selling, or being under the influence of controlled substances
- Being under the influence of alcohol during work hours
- Carrying or possessing firearms, explosives or weapons on District property without prior permission
- Fighting or attempting to injure other employees, supervisors, or the public
- Stealing, destroying, damaging, or concealing property of the District or another employee
- Dishonesty or dishonest action such as theft, pilfering, opening desks assigned to others, making false statements, etc.
- Giving a false statement during the investigation of another
- Driving while under the influence of alcohol or drugs while on District business
- Use of abusive or threatening language toward a supervisor
- Job Abandonment

Termination may be the result of the employee failing to correct the problem after going through all the steps of discipline or the employee committing a violation that requires immediate termination. Regardless of the reason for the termination the main focus at this point is not the counseling of the employee but following the proper procedures

Discipline Steps Time Limitation

The goal of Progressive Discipline is to discipline an employee so that they will be encouraged to correct the behavior without the need for any further action by the District. By limiting the time of each step of discipline, the employee will feel that once they have corrected the problem they will start with a clean slate. Without time limits, the employee will feel that once they get into trouble they will never be able to get out from under their previous mistake. If the employee feels that the district is “out to get them,” then they may not be as willing to correct the behavior (*self-fulfilling prophesy*).

The basic rule is that once the time limit has expired, the occurrence of another violation will be as if the subsequent violations never happened.

Listed below is the time limitation of each step of discipline.

Discipline Step Time Limits

Verbal Warning	3 months
Written Warning	6 months
Suspension	12 months
Termination	Indefinitely

Hondo ISD
Verbal Warning Form

Date:

Employee:

Department:

State the facts of the incident:

State specifically the expected performance:

Explanation by the employee or other significant information:

By signing this form the employee is not being asked to agree or disagree with the documented information; it is only verifying that a copy was given to the employee.

Employee's Signature

Date

Supervisor's Signature

Date

Hondo ISD Employee Disciplinary Report

Name: _____ Department/Location: _____

Date of Incident: _____ Time of Incident: _____

Action to be taken: Written Warning Suspension Termination

This report is to be made part of the official record of the above-mentioned employee.

Nature of Incident

- | | | |
|---|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Unexcused/excessive absence | <input type="checkbox"/> Disorderly conduct | <input type="checkbox"/> Theft |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Leaving without permission | <input type="checkbox"/> Substandard Work | <input type="checkbox"/> Careless |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Lack of cooperation/teamwork | <input type="checkbox"/> Violation of safety rules | <input type="checkbox"/> Tardiness |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Threatening/engaging in violence | <input type="checkbox"/> Workstation cleanliness | <input type="checkbox"/> Dress code |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Violation of policies/procedures | <input type="checkbox"/> Profane/Abusive Language | <input type="checkbox"/> Harassment |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Failure to follow instructions | <input type="checkbox"/> Discourteous toward public | <input type="checkbox"/> Disobey directive |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Destruction of district property | <input type="checkbox"/> Use of drugs/alcohol/tobacco | <input type="checkbox"/> Improper conduct |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Failure to work assigned shift | <input type="checkbox"/> Sleeping during work hours | <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____ |

Facts of the Incident: _____

Witnesses to Incident: _____

Employee's Comments: _____

Desired Outcome: _____

- Consequences of failure to improve:** Discipline up to and including Termination
 Suspension
 Immediate Termination

I have read this report. I understand that my signature does not necessarily indicate that I agree with its content.

Employee Signature: _____ Date: _____

Director Signature: _____ Date: _____

HR Signature: _____ Date: _____