

Category: 300

Number: 341

Policy: DISCIPLINE AND DISCHARGE

Purpose: The purpose of this policy is to define and serve as primary guidance for decisions relating to discipline and discharge.

Authority: St. Clair County Board of Commissioners. Administrative policies shall be subject to revision or termination by the Board of Commissioners at its discretion. This policy replaces and supersedes any prior policy on this subject matter.

Application: This policy applies primarily to all County employees except to employees who are employed by a co-employer elected official. Employees who are members of Unions should consult the applicable collective bargaining agreement. Where a collective bargaining agreement is silent, this policy will apply.

Responsibility: Except as provided above, the Human Resources Director or designee shall be responsible for the administration and enforcement of this policy.

Employment status at the County is generally "at will." This means subject to legal requirements and/or collective bargaining agreement requirements; an employee may be terminated with or without cause.

FORMS OF DISCIPLINE

The County may apply progressive discipline, however, the County retains and reserves the discretion to apply any level of discipline it determines is appropriate. This policy does not change or limit the at-will employment relationship.

Infractions, which warrant discipline but not employment termination, may be dealt with in one of the following methods:

- Verbal counseling with a written notice retained on file with a copy to the employee.
- Verbal reprimand with a written notice retained on file with a copy to the employee.
- Written discipline outlining the infraction and the discipline available to the department head and/or supervisor for further violation with a copy retained on file.
- Suspension without pay for a minimum of the remaining part of a shift to a maximum of five (5) full consecutive working days. A suspension notice must be provided to the Human Resources Director immediately, but no later than the next working day of the County.
- Discipline may be initiated at any level appropriate to the severity of the misconduct.
- Discipline may be progressive but progressive discipline is not required to be performed and if applied does not have to be in the order outlined above but shall be appropriate based on the severity of the misconduct.

Discipline shall be administered singularly with each occurrence provided previous discipline may be considered when deciding the level of discipline to be imposed for a current infraction. If progressive discipline is used, it may be based on varying and/or unrelated behavior or misconduct. An employee shall not be disciplined twice for the same incident unless new and extenuating circumstances come to light after discipline is administered. A department head and/or supervisor shall make every effort to discipline an employee privately.

UNREPORTED ABSENCES

Employees absent for two (2) consecutive working days without reporting their absence are subject to discharge unless the department head and/or supervisor determines there were extenuating circumstances beyond the

employee's control. A termination for unreported absences or failure to return to work shall be deemed to be a voluntary termination by the employee.

SLOWDOWNS AND STRIKES

Employees who participate in work slowdowns or strikes are subject to discipline up to and including employment termination.

For further information, an employee may contact the Human Resources by telephone at (810) 989-6910 or by email at humanresources@stclaircounty.org.

Review: The Administrator/Controller has reviewed and approved this policy as to substance and Corporation Counsel has reviewed and approved as to legal content. The Human Resources Director shall periodically review this policy and make recommendations for changes as needed.

Adopted: May 20, 2021

Revised: **September 19, 2024**