

APPROVED James D. Williams

## EMPLOYEE DISCIPLINE POLICY

### I. GENERAL

It is the goal of the Fairbanks North Star Borough to fairly and consistently administer employee discipline when needed to ensure appropriate employee behavior.

### II. PURPOSE

This policy sets forth uniform procedures for administering employee discipline.

### III. RESPONSIBILITY

- A. Each Department Director shall ensure that the procedure set forth in this policy is followed by their department staff in a consistent manner.
- B. Compliance with this policy is the responsibility of all Borough employees.
- C. Human Resources shall maintain this policy.

### IV. POLICY

It is the policy of the Fairbanks North Star Borough to establish and maintain a formal system of employee discipline applicable to all Borough employees that conforms with the recognized principles of proper personnel management. This policy will ensure that the rules of the work place and accepted standards of employee conduct are adhered to by all Borough employees, and discipline, when deemed necessary, is equitably and uniformly administered. This system will apply to all Borough employees except for appointed officials, and employees fulfilling probationary status.

### V. PROCEDURE

- A. Supervisors are acting as an authorized agent of the Borough, and punitive sanctions administered by management may be subject to review. Management must always be able to justify its actions through documentation and/or verifiable testimony of witnesses.
- B. Discipline must conform to the following criteria:
  - 1. Management must make a reasonable effort to assure that the work force at large, and each individual employee, is aware of the rules and what criteria constitutes acceptable job performance. All employees will be furnished a copy of work rules, their position classification, a briefing by their supervisor covering job assignments, working hours, break times, appropriate dress, and any other relevant topic particular to the specific job and assigned functions.
  - 2. Management must conduct a thorough, impartial and objective investigation to fully determine all the facts surrounding an incident or issue, and act in a timely manner. The following factors must be specifically addressed:
    - a. Define the incident or issue in very precise terms.

- b. Determine who was involved, if there were any witnesses and how the matter was brought to management's attention.
    - c. Indicate the date, time, and exact location of the incident.
  3. The employee involved must be provided a meaningful opportunity to present information on the issue or incident. An employee has a right to request union representation during an investigative interview if the employee has reasonable belief that discipline or other adverse consequences may result from what he/she says in the interview. In such an instance, the supervisor has the following options: 1) stop questioning the employee until the union representative arrives; or 2) call off the interview and reschedule; or 3) continue the interview if the employee voluntarily gives up his/her rights to a union representative. In all cases the employee shall be informed of the subject of the interview prior to commencement of the meeting.
  4. The form of discipline to administer must be based upon the following considerations:
    - a. The disciplinary action must be appropriate to the offense (i.e., it must not be excessive).
    - b. Discipline must be applied consistently, both in the department and throughout the organization.
- C. It is an accepted principle of management that discipline will be administered in progressive stages in order to be reasonable and equitable. This sequence of discipline generally involves oral counseling, written warning, suspension without pay, and dismissal for just cause. See attached "Table of Suggested Disciplinary Penalties."
  1. Oral Counseling: This is a conference between an employee and the immediate supervisor in which the subordinate is informed that specific conduct is unacceptable. Attention is directed to the appropriate written rule or standard, and the employee is advised that future incidents of unacceptable behavior will result in more serious formal disciplinary action (which could be suspension, or dismissal in some cases). It is critical that a written record of the counseling session be made by the supervisor on the Oral Counseling Summary form, and retained as a "anecdotal record" (APEA Agreement, Article 25, Section 5.C) to be maintained by the supervisor as a confidential record. The Oral Counseling Summary form should be completed in its entirety and signed and dated by both the employee and the supervisor. If the problem is corrected within the specified time and there are no further disciplinary actions within one (1) year, the oral counseling notes shall be purged from the record.
  2. Written Warning: This is a formal written warning given to employees who do not respond to counseling, or are involved in a moderately serious incident that is not of sufficient magnitude to warrant a suspension. The written warning will specifically outline the incident or offense, date, time, place, witnesses, and will include a warning that any further violations of rules will result in either a suspension or dismissal (whichever is appropriate). The employee and the attending representative (e.g. union) shall be requested to acknowledge receipt of the written warning by signature. A copy will be presented to the employee and the original will be forwarded to Human Resources for inclusion in the employee's