



# Standards of Conduct and Discipline

**TIMBERLAND REGIONAL LIBRARY (TRL)** strives to provide outstanding public service, and expects that certain standards of conduct will be maintained by employees. It is important to establish expectations regarding employee conduct to ensure efficient operations, and for the benefit and safety of all employees. Employees should conduct themselves in a professional manner and use good judgment in performing their job duties. TRL expects that these standards of conduct will be maintained by all employees.

## **Purpose**

To provide a guide for expectations of all employees, and to establish due process and procedures for coaching and disciplinary action. Standardized disciplinary procedures promote consistency in corrective actions and their application for directors, managers and supervisors.

## **Procedure**

To use a uniform system of disciplinary action. Workplace expectations are listed, but are not limited to those cited in this document. Current administrative policies, rules, procedures, as well as departmental work rules and procedures, shall be made readily available to all employees.

## **Causes for Disciplinary Action**

Any TRL employee may be subject to disciplinary action for the following, or any other nondiscriminatory reason, which adversely affects job performance:

1. Engaging in any form of sexual or other unlawful harassment of, or discrimination towards another employee, a member of the public or a vendor;
2. Assaulting or threatening a fellow employee, vendor, or any member of the public;
3. A pattern of discourteous treatment or bullying behavior toward the public or other TRL employees;
4. Violation of the TRL's adopted safety rules and practices or personal conduct at work which is clearly dangerous to the employee or others;
5. Conviction of a felony or a misdemeanor which could adversely impact the employee's ability to effectively and efficiently perform the duties of their position;
6. Negligent or willful damage to TRL-owned or private property, theft or wasting TRL-owned supplies and equipment;
7. Failing to fully cooperate or be truthful in a lawful TRL investigation;
8. Violation of the TRL Drug-Free Workplace Policy;
9. Failing to report an invalid driver's license, in a timely manner, if you are required to drive for TRL business;
10. Operation of a TRL vehicle, or any vehicle operated in the course of TRL business, in a reckless or dangerous manner;
11. Failure to report an accident involving a TRL vehicle or any vehicle operated in the course of TRL business;
12. Falsifying or altering any TRL record or report, such as an employment application, medical reports, production records, time records, expense reports, absentee reports, or the like;
13. Misusing TRL communication systems, including electronic mail, computers, internet access and telephones;
14. Disclosing confidential patron or employee information;



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15. Unauthorized absence from work, tardiness, or abuse of sick leave privileges;
16. Refusing to follow management's instructions concerning a job-related matter, or otherwise being insubordinate;
17. Sleeping on the job;
18. Acceptance of a gratuity or gift that exceeds the allowed amount/value as outlined in RCW 42.52.150.
19. Engaging in political campaign activity during working hours, or using TRL resources to promote a political campaign;
20. Unauthorized solicitation of employees on TRL premises during working time;
21. Smoking, vaping, or use of tobacco products where prohibited by TRL policy or local ordinance;
22. Violating other TRL policies.

### **Procedure**

TRL may discipline an employee for cause in a manner consistent with the nature and severity of the situation, any applicable collective bargaining agreement and designed to achieve correction and avoid recurrence. Probationary employees are not guaranteed the use of progressive discipline. Progressive discipline should be an attempt to help the employee correct any job-related deficiencies and will begin with the least amount of action needed.

Workplace coaching is the process of equipping people with the tools, knowledge, and opportunities they need to be effective on the job. Supervisors will provide ongoing coaching to their employees as part of their routine check-ins with their staff. Coaching and informal counseling should be utilized prior to formal discipline whenever possible.

Disciplinary action represents the last step in counseling employees. Prior to initiation of disciplinary action, supervisors should affirm that an employee has been adequately trained to perform the tasks required, is familiar with work rules, and has been advised of objective job performance standards. When possible and practical, discipline should be exercised in a mutually constructive and progressive manner.

There are four general methods or levels of discipline. These levels will generally be followed in order from Level 1 through Level 4; however, there is no requirement that this order of the specific methods be followed. Individual circumstances may cause progressive discipline to be inappropriate. Such circumstances include cases where the infraction is of such a nature that significant discipline, including termination, is justifiable, even on the first offense.

### **Level 1 - Documented Verbal Reprimand**

An employee may be notified at least once by their immediate supervisor of an undesirable trend in performance or conduct and the need for correction. When possible, this is the step that all formal discipline will start with. An employee will know that this is formal discipline and will be provided the opportunity to have Union representation. After two (2) years TRL will consider removal of such documents from an employee's personnel file if the employee requests such removal in writing and if the employee has not exhibited problems of a similar nature during that two (2) year period.

### **Level 2 - Written Reprimand**



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Should an employee's inadequate performance or conduct not improve following a verbal notification, or should the situation warrant, a written notice outlining the employee's inadequate performance/conduct shall be issued to the employee by their supervisor. Such notice shall include the areas of employee performance and/or conduct which are below required TRL standards and the corrective action required of the employee. Failure of the employee to meet necessary standards may result in suspension or termination, as warranted. A copy of said written reprimand shall be placed in the employee's personnel file. The employee shall have the option of submitting a written rebuttal to the written reprimand within five days. After two (2) years TRL will consider removal of such documents from an employee's personnel file if the employee requests such removal in writing and if the employee has not exhibited problems of a similar nature during that two (2) year period. Evaluations will not be removed from an employee's personnel file.

### **Level 3 - Disciplinary Suspension**

An employee, whose inadequate performance or conduct may necessitate termination of employment for cause, may be suspended without pay and benefits for a specified period of time.

### **Level 4 - Dismissal**

It is recognized and agreed that TRL has the right to dismiss any employee for cause. Should an employee fail to improve following progressive discipline, the employee may be dismissed. In the event of major misconduct, dishonesty, or gross insubordination, the employee may be dismissed, even if the employee does not have a previous disciplinary record. Except in cases of major misconduct, dishonesty, gross insubordination, or job abandonment, the employee shall be given two (2) weeks' notice or pay in lieu of notice. Job abandonment is triggered after three (3) no call, no show absences. TRL will notify the Union within 3 working days after an employee is involuntarily discharged.