



RESOLUTION R-023-25

A RESOLUTION OF THE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS OF WALKER COUNTY TO ADOPT A PROGRESSIVE DISCIPLINARY PROCEDURE FOR UNDESIRABLE EMPLOYEE BEHAVIOR & PERFORMANCE ISSUES

WHEREAS, the Board of Commissioners of Walker County (“Board”) is the governing authority of Walker County, Georgia; and

WHEREAS, the Board has determined it is desirable and necessary to adopt a procedure to improve and prevent the recurrence of undesirable employee behavior and performance issues; and

WHEREAS, the Board desires to establish and maintain a progressive disciplinary procedure that considers whether the offense repeatedly occurs despite coaching, counseling or training, the employee’s work record, and the impact the conduct and performance issues have on the organization; and

WHEREAS, the County reserves the right to adjust the steps depending on the circumstances of each situation and the nature of the offense. Thus, employees can be terminated without prior notice or disciplinary action;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED by the Board of Commissioners of Walker County, Georgia that the Progressive Disciplinary Procedure for Undesirable Employee Behavior & Performance Issues, attached hereto marked “Exhibit A,” and incorporated by reference, is hereby adopted and shall be implemented immediately.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED any other Resolution or county policy addressing disciplinary action prior to this date, that is now in conflict with any of the provisions of this Resolution, is hereby repealed.

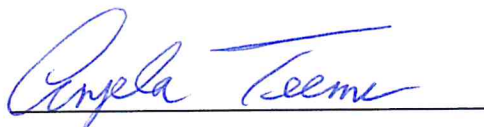
SO RESOLVED AND ADOPTED this 3rd day of April, 2025.

ATTEST:

WALKER COUNTY, GEORGIA



LISA RICHARDSON, County Clerk



ANGELA TEEMS, Chairwoman



The foregoing Resolution received a motion for Approval from Commissioner Teems, second by Commissioner Askeu, and upon the question the vote is 4 ayes, 0 nays to Approve the Resolution.



PROGRESSIVE DISCIPLINARY PROCEDURE

Walker County Government's (WCG) progressive discipline policy and procedures are designed to provide a structured corrective action process to improve and prevent a recurrence of undesirable employee behavior and performance issues. It has been designed consistently with WCG's organizational values, Human Resource (HR) best practices and employment laws.

Outlined below are the steps for WCG's progressive discipline policy and procedure. WCG reserves the right to combine or skip steps depending on the facts of each situation and the nature of the offense. The level of disciplinary intervention may also vary. Some of the factors that will be considered are whether the offense is repeated despite coaching, counseling or training, the employee's work record, and the impact the conduct and performance issues have on the organization.

PROCEDURES

Human Resources should be consulted before any warnings are issued plus will be included in each step of the process. All documents should be reviewed by the HR Director before any meeting with the employee to assure compliance with all legal and policy matters. HR, or an HR designee, will serve as a neutral witness to all disciplinary meetings.

Step 1: Counseling and verbal (first written) warning

Step 1 creates an opportunity for the immediate supervisor to schedule a meeting with an employee to bring attention to the existing performance, conduct or attendance issue. The supervisor should discuss with the employee the nature of the problem or the violation of department policies and procedures. The supervisor is expected to clearly describe expectations and steps the employee must take to improve performance or resolve the problem.

Employees have the opportunity to present information to HR that may challenge information used by management to issue disciplinary action. This process provides insight into extenuating circumstances that may have contributed to the employee's performance or conduct issues, while allowing for an equitable solution.

If the employee does not present this information during any of the step meetings, he or she has five business days after that meeting to present such information.



PROGRESSIVE DISCIPLINARY PROCEDURE

Within five business days of this meeting, the supervisor will prepare written documentation of a Step 1 meeting on the Progressive Disciplinary Action Form. The employee will be asked to sign this document to demonstrate his or her understanding of the issues and the corrective action.

WCG expects the employee to promptly correct any performance and/or behavior issues that were identified in Step 1. A subsequent meeting will be held 10 days business days after the initial meeting to discuss success or failure to adhere to the explained expectations.

Step 2: Written warning

If an employee does not meet the expectations discussed and explained in the first disciplinary meeting, the supervisor will utilize Step 2 in this process.

The Step 2 written warning involves formal documentation of the specific performance and/or behavior issues. During Step 2, the immediate supervisor or director will meet with the employee to review any additional incidents or information about the performance and/or behavior. An action plan will be decided upon between the supervisor and the employee. Management will outline the consequences for the employee of his or her continued failure to meet performance and/or behavior expectations.

A formal performance improvement plan (PIP) requiring the employee's immediate and sustained corrective action will be issued within five business days of a Step 2 meeting.

A subsequent meeting will be held 30 days after the initial meeting to discuss success or failure to adhere to the explained expectations. The employee may be subject to additional discipline, up to and including termination, if corrective action is not taken. A meeting can be scheduled sooner than 30 days if the employee is not displaying the expected behavior.

Step 3: Final Warning Suspension

There may be performance and/or behavior incidents so problematic and harmful that the most effective action may be the removal of the employee from the workplace. When immediate action is necessary to ensure the safety of the employee or others, the immediate supervisor may suspend the employee pending the results of an investigation.



PROGRESSIVE DISCIPLINARY PROCEDURE

Suspensions that are recommended as part of the normal progression of this progressive discipline policy and procedure are subject to approval from a next-level manager, HR and Elected Official. Suspension may not be available for some job positions within WCG.

Depending on the seriousness of the infraction, the employee may be suspended without pay in full-day increments consistent with federal, state and local wage-and-hour employment laws. Non-exempt/hourly employees may not substitute for or use an accrued PTO in lieu of the unpaid suspension. Due to Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA) compliance issues, unpaid suspension of salaried/exempt employees is reserved for serious workplace safety or conduct issues. HR will provide guidance, so the discipline is administered without jeopardizing the FLSA exemption status.

Pay may be restored to the employee if an investigation of the incident or infraction absolves the employee.

Return to work after any suspension automatically places the employee on probationary status for a minimum of ninety (90) days. During this time, the employee may use PTO only in an emergency situation. Any infraction of any kind during this time will result in immediate termination.

Step 4: Recommendation for termination of employment

The last and most serious step in the progressive discipline procedure is a recommendation to terminate employment. WCG will exercise Steps 1 and 2; and, 3 (when appropriate based on the specific situation) before proceeding to Step 4: recommendation to terminate employment. Because there are varying types of jobs within Walker County Government, we reserve the right to adjust the steps depending on the circumstances of each situation and the nature of the offense. Thus, employees can be terminated without prior notice or disciplinary action.

Management's recommendation to terminate employment must be approved by HR and the division director. Final approval will be required from the Elected Official.

Performance and Conduct Issues Not Subject to Progressive Discipline

Behavior that is illegal is not subject to progressive discipline, and such behavior may be reported to local law enforcement authorities.



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PROGRESSIVE DISCIPLINARY PROCEDURE

Similarly, theft, substance abuse, intoxication, fighting, threats of violence and acts of violence at work are also not subject to progressive discipline and may be grounds for immediate termination.

In these extreme circumstances, the safety of other employees will be paramount, but HR should be notified immediately.

DOCUMENTATION

The employee will be provided with copies of all progressive discipline documentation, including all PIPs. The employee will be asked to sign copies of this documentation attesting to his or her receipt and understanding of the corrective action outlined in these documents.

The original documents will be placed in the employee's official personnel file in the Human Resources Office. Because of the sensitive nature of the information in the records, copies will not be maintained in departmental offices. The exception to this will be Elected Officials, who will keep copies in locked files within their offices.

NOTE: Nothing in this policy provides any contractual rights regarding employee discipline or counseling, nor should anything in this policy be read or construed as modifying or altering the employment-at-will relationship between Walker County Government and its employees.

APPROVED

Angie Teems
Chairwoman/CEO
Walker County Government
101 S. Duke Street
LaFayette, GA 30728



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PROGRESSIVE DISCIPLINARY PROCEDURE

EMPLOYEE ACKNOWLEDGEMENT AND RECEIPT

I, _____, acknowledge that I have had the PROGRESSIVE DISCIPLINE reviewed with me completely and in full detail. I have had an opportunity to ask questions about any section I did not understand.

I understand that my failure to comply with any part of this policy may result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination. I also understand that violation of those sections that are defined as zero tolerance will result in immediate termination of employment.

By signing this document, I am stating that I understand the standards as explained in this policy and agree to abide by them and that I have received a copy of this policy for my personal records.

 X

Employee
Date: _____

 X

Witness
Date: _____