

Progressive Discipline

Savannah State University practices a "progressive disciplinary procedure." Failure to comply with University policies or inadequate performance of job duties may result in verbal counseling and/or formal disciplinary action up to and including termination. The University encourages employees to work with their supervisors to resolve problems.

NOTE: Supervisor should seek counsel with representatives of the Office of Human Resources relative to administering formal disciplinary actions to include the suspension, demotion or termination of an employee.

Verbal Counseling

Verbal counseling provides the supervisor the opportunity to specify to the employee what he/she is doing wrong and what corrective steps are necessary. During the meeting, the supervisor will discuss the time frame for correcting the behavior and schedule a follow-up meeting when applicable. Supervisors are encouraged to maintain documentation concerning performance and behavioral counseling sessions.

Formal Written or Final Warnings

When an employee does not respond to verbal counseling or when the infraction is serious, the supervisor will issue a formal written reprimand. The supervisor will meet with the employee to discuss the reprimand and corrective measures the employee needs to take to resolve the issue.

Suspension or Termination

Failure to comply with University policies or inadequate performance of job duties may result in the suspension, demotion or dismissal of an employee. Supervisors will make a reasonable effort through progressive discipline to help an employee improve their performance before taking this type of disciplinary action. Supervisor shall consult with representatives in the Department of Human Resources to ensure proper documentation is established prior to issuing either a suspension or termination. In all cases, the disciplinary action should be accompanied by a letter that is issued to the employee with copies provided to the Office of Human Resources for inclusion in the employee's official personnel file.

Contact Human Resources at 358-4194 for assistance in drafting the suspension or termination letter. Copies of the written disciplinary warning shall be provided to the employee and the Office of Human Resources for inclusion in the employee's official personnel file.

Tips for Disciplinary Meetings

Answer these questions before holding a disciplinary meeting:

- Did the employee know the rule or standard involved?
- Did the employee know what constitutes a violation?
- Has the rule been enforced in the past?
- Does clear objective evidence show the employee committed the violation?
- Has the employee violated this rule before?
- Has the employee had a history of violations?
- Have other employees received similar discipline for the same offense?
- Does the disciplinary action reflect any bias against the employee?
- Is the disciplinary action appropriate for the offense?

Answer these questions during a disciplinary meeting:

- Does the employee understand the violation, its seriousness, and its impact?
- Has the employee had a chance to explain the situation from his or her side?
- Are there any circumstances beyond the employee's control that affected this situation?
- Has the discussion remained calm, avoiding accusations?
- Is the focus on correction, not blame?
- Does the discipline match the violation?
- Has the employee offered suggestions for corrective action?

Dispute Resolution Options

Mediation provides an option to help resolve work-related conflict. Whether a problem developed last week or over a longer period of time, mediation offers two people an opportunity to discuss issues in a confidential atmosphere. Contact the Office of Human Resources for detailed information.