



CORRECTIVE ACTION & EMPLOYEE ACCOUNTABILITY

Overview

All County employees are expected to (1) perform their job duties in a manner that meets the performance standards established by the County; and (2) behave, in the workplace, in a manner that complies with standards of conduct prescribed or reasonably expected by the County. When this does not occur, employees should be held accountable through a corrective action process.

Employee issues that require corrective action generally can be classified as either a performance or behavior issue. Performance issues are different from behavior issues and should be addressed, generally, through the performance management system. Before taking any action it is important to best classify the employment issue as either performance or behavior.

I. Performance

When an issue is one of performance, action should be assessed and structured through the Performance Improvement Process, Procedure 410-2. In general, the County supports a positive, interactive process to address unsatisfactory performance beginning with coaching. If coaching does not improve performance to an acceptable level, a Performance Improvement Plan and/or Final Performance Management Plan may be appropriate.

However, a manager or supervisor may use the performance improvement steps in whatever manner he/she determines is best to correct the specific performance issue.

Coaching: When initiating coaching as a performance improvement action step, the employee should be clearly advised that the discussion, however informal, is the first step toward performance improvement and should provide specific, solutions-oriented direction. The supervisor should review with the employee the performance expectations of the job and provide specific examples of how the employee's performance has fallen short of expectations. Coaching discussions should be noted in the supervisor's working file.

Performance Improvement Plan: If coaching has not corrected the unsatisfactory performance or is not an appropriate performance action step, a Performance Improvement Plan should be developed to assist the employee in bringing his/her performance up to performance expectations. The Performance Improvement Plan should be an interactive process between the supervisor and employee and should address:

- Specific performance problems
- Performance expectations
- Methods to improve and correct deficiencies
- Timeline for improvement
- Follow-up meetings

Final Performance Management Plan: A Final Performance Management Plan may be appropriate when the performance issues are severe, when they have been repeated multiple times, when the impact on the department/agency is significant, or when other performance



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improvement efforts have been unsuccessful. A Final Performance Management Plan will address the same elements as a Performance Improvement Plan. **At the conclusion of a Final Performance Management Plan, if the employee is not meeting performance expectations, the employee cannot remain in the position and corrective action must be taken to transfer, demote, or terminate employment.**

Departments/agencies should consult with the Department of Human Resources before taking this level of corrective action.

Templates for a Performance Improvement Plan and a Final Performance Management Plan are located on the HR web page.

II. Behavior

When an issue is one of behavior, corrective action should be assessed and structured through the Disciplinary Process, Procedure 410-3. The County prefers to provide employees with an opportunity to resolve behavior problems through the disciplinary process which is intended to hold employees accountable for their behavior and conduct in the workplace. Disciplinary action may be instituted at any level in the process that the manager or supervisor believes is most appropriate including repeating any particular level.

Verbal Counseling: Verbal counseling is appropriate at the onset of minor infractions of County policies and procedures or of department/agency rules. Verbal counseling should be informal but specific about the nature of the misconduct or behavioral problem. Counseling should be noted in the supervisor's file.

Written Reprimand: A Written Reprimand is formal notice to an employee that misconduct has occurred and action must be taken to correct the behavior. The Written Reprimand should include:

- The relevant County policy or procedure, or department/agency rule
- The conduct or behavior that fails to comply with expectations
- Explains the impact of the conduct
- Describes what actions the employee must take to resolve the issue
- Informs the employee of the consequences if the issue is not resolved

Suspension without Pay, Demotion with a Reduction in Pay, or Termination of Employment: This level of discipline may be appropriate for incidents of serious misconduct which has an adverse impact on the County or its operations or when other forms of discipline have not resolved the issue. Departments/agencies should consult with the Department of Human Resources before taking this level of corrective disciplinary action.