

Partnership for Children of Cumberland County, Inc.
Human Resources Policies and Procedures

Employment Information – Rules of Conduct

Section 502 – At Will Termination and Progressive Discipline

1. General Information

- a. The purpose of this policy is to state the Partnership for Children of Cumberland County, Inc.'s (PFC) position on administering equitable and consistent discipline for unsatisfactory conduct in the workplace. It is a management tool intended to improve the overall efficiency of the organization. It is not intended to create, nor does it create, any additional legal rights not already provided to employee-at-will employees under North Carolina or Federal Law. Furthermore, it is not intended to create, nor does it create, any contractual or property interests in continued employment with PFC.
- b. PFC's own best interest lies in ensuring fair treatment of all employees and in making certain that disciplinary actions are prompt, uniform, and impartial. The major purpose of any disciplinary action is to correct the problem, prevent recurrence and prepare the employee for satisfactory service in the future.
- c. By using progressive discipline, PFC hopes that most employee problems can be corrected at an early stage, benefiting both the employee and PFC.
- d. This policy applies to permanent employees, temporary employees, full-time employees, part-time employees, interns (paid or unpaid) and volunteers, if appropriate to the circumstance.
- e. The President is authorized to terminate, suspend without pay or otherwise discipline employees of PFC.
- f. The President is subject to termination, suspension without pay or other discipline by action of the Board of Directors.

2. Policies

- a. Employment with PFC is based on mutual consent and either the employee or PFC has the right to terminate this employment at will, with or without cause or advance notice. However, PFC may use progressive discipline at its discretion in furtherance of the interests of the organization.
- b. Disciplinary action may call for any of five steps; verbal warning, written warning, disciplinary probation, suspension without pay, and termination of employment; depending on the severity of the problem and the number of occurrences. There may be circumstances when one or more steps are bypassed.
- c. PFC recognizes that there are certain types of employee problems that are serious enough to justify either a suspension, or, in extreme situations, termination of employment, without going through the usual progressive discipline steps.

d. Documentation of written warnings will be signed by the supervisor and the employee and kept in the employee's personnel file in the Human Resources Coordinator's office. If an employee refuses to sign, the supervisor will have a witness sign that a copy was given to the employee. The employee's signature indicates receipt of the document but not necessarily his or her agreement with it.

e. An employee may be placed on disciplinary probation by the President to allow the employee to show improvement on the problem(s) specified at the time of probation. The disciplinary probation period begins when the President provides the employee with a written and signed document that includes the following:
1. Identifies the problem(s); 2. Indicates the necessary improvement; 3. Specifies length of probation period; and 4. Informs the employee of further disciplinary action, which could result from failure to show satisfactory improvement within the specified probation period.

f. Cumulative written warnings, disciplinary probations and suspensions over time, which considered separately do not warrant termination, when viewed collectively may result in termination.

g. Termination of employment occurs when the employee is informed verbally or in writing that he or she is terminated by the President of PFC, or the President's designee.

3. Guidelines

While it is impossible to list every type of behavior that may be deemed a serious offense, the Employee Conduct and Work Rules, Section 501 of these policies and procedures, includes examples of problems that may result in the immediate suspension or termination of employment. However, the conduct listed in Section 501 are not necessarily all the types of serious offenses which may result in discipline but are merely illustrative of unsatisfactory conduct that will trigger discipline. Additional examples of prohibited conduct are also identified in other sections of this policy and even the addition of those noted items of prohibited conduct do not include the entire range of activities which can lead to discipline, either progressive or immediate. Finally, for the benefit of the PFC, in certain cases warranting immediate action, the President may suspend or terminate an employee notwithstanding any other provision herein except those mandated by State or Federal Law.