Employee Conduct and Progressive Discipline Policy

Responsible Office: Human Resources

I. POLICY STATEMENT
All employees are required to comply with University policies and rules concerning or governing employee conduct. It is the full and sole responsibility of every employee to know what university, college/school and departmental rules, regulations, and policies exist and apply and to observe them at all times.

II. POLICY PRINCIPLES
Below are three groups of specific conduct that may subject an employee to disciplinary action. Importantly, the types of conduct specified below are not an exhaustive or fully inclusive list of the types of conduct that may subject an employee to disciplinary action.

This policy provides guidelines for the management and discipline of all employees, including the use of progressive discipline when appropriate and warranted under the circumstances. However, the University maintains its exclusive right to discipline its employees as may be appropriate and necessary under the circumstances.

An employee’s immediate supervisor, with guidance from and in coordination with Campus Relations, will administer all appropriate disciplinary action.

Group I
An employee who commits a Group I offense will be subject to immediate termination. Group I offenses include, but are not limited to:

a. Intimidating or intentionally imposing on the rights and privileges of other employees.
b. Drinking intoxicants or using illegal drugs while performing job duties on University property, or performing job duties while intoxicated or under the influence of illegal drugs.
c. Changing or otherwise falsifying or forging any University records, documents, permits, time cards or time sheets, licenses, certifications, passes, badges, sharing of computer passwords, or knowingly approving the signatures on falsified or forged University documents.
d. Engaging in highly offensive, obscene, or otherwise inappropriate conduct.
e. Engaging in conduct that is highly unprofessional or unbecoming of the employee’s position with the University.
f. Deliberately restricting production output and/or University operations or concealing defective work.
g. Stealing or misappropriating University property or property belonging to other employees.
h. Intentionally defacing or damaging University property or the property of other employees.
i. Fighting with or causing bodily harm to another individual on University property.
j. Creating disturbances, including using abusive or threatening language, on University property or in connection with the employee’s employment with the University, such that morale, the working environment, production, operations, studies, and/or discipline are adversely affected.
k. Failing to report to work, or failing to follow proper call-in procedures/notify your supervisor of your absence from work for three (3) consecutive working days.
1. Intentionally, knowingly, or recklessly violating any University policies, rules, or procedures for which termination is warranted.

m. Failure to satisfactorily complete or comply with a performance improvement plan.

n. Refusing to submit to a random drug test, as applicable, or to a reasonable suspicion drug test.

o. Ineffectiveness in one’s position.

p. Any other actions not listed in (a-o) above but considered by the University as constituting insubordination, significant misconduct, gross negligence, or significant disregard of an employee’s obligation to the University.

An employee may be terminated as a result of being charged with, arrested or indicted for, or convicted of a criminal offense. The specific disciplinary action taken, if any, will be determined by the nature of the offense and the employee’s job responsibilities and duties.

**Group II**

An employee who commits a Group II offense may be given a Written Final Reprimand, unless the circumstances warrant immediate termination. An employee’s violation of any University rule, policy, or procedure after receiving a written final warning may result in additional disciplinary action, up to and including immediate termination. A written final warning will be filed and maintained in the employee’s official personnel record in Human Resources.

Group II offenses include, but are not limited to:

a. Significant or grossly substandard job performance.

b. Sleeping while on duty during working hours.

c. Reporting to work under the influence of alcohol or illegal controlled substances.

d. Refusing to follow reasonable and necessary orders, directions, or job assignments.

e. Engaging in horseplay or malicious mischief in any form.

f. Failing to report to work without approval or leaving the worksite prior to the end of any normal work period without approval.

g. Failing to return to work at the end of an authorized leave period unless the supervisor has been advised of the reason and the appropriate approval has been granted.

h. Failing to report to work and to use appropriate call-in procedures to report an absence.

i. Clocking in and out at an unauthorized location, or otherwise failing to follow proper time-keeping procedures.

j. Violating the University’s smoke free campus policy. *See smoke-free campus policy*

**Group III**

Unless the circumstances warrant imposing other disciplinary action, including immediate termination, an employee who commits a Group III offense may be given (preferably in order and as repeated violations occur, unless the circumstances warrant otherwise):

1. A Verbal Reprimand.

2. A Written Formal Reprimand.

3. A Written Final Reprimand, after which the employee’s violation of any University rule, policy, or procedure may result in additional disciplinary action, up to and including immediate termination.
Group III offenses include, but are not limited to:

b. Failing to immediately report to the employee’s supervisor all injuries or illnesses occurring at work.
c. Disregarding safe work practices and other safety standards at work.
d. Contributing to poor housekeeping or unsanitary conditions.
e. Practicing poor personal hygiene.
f. Distracting or annoying other employees while they are performing assigned duties.
g. Damaging University property and equipment through improper use or lack of care.
h. Abusing sick leave privileges, having unapproved absences or habitual tardiness from work.
i. Failing to comply with a department’s dress code.

Non-Faculty employees in probationary periods of initial employment or re-employment may be formally disciplined and/or terminated for any conduct or unsatisfactory job performance during this probationary period. These employees do not have a right to appeal disciplinary action except for complaints that the disciplinary action arose out of, or was based on, discrimination or harassment based on their race, color, religion, sex, age, disability, national origin, veteran’s status or any other legally protected category. AU Policy Against Discrimination and Harassment

An employee who is terminated for violating an employee conduct rule is ineligible for rehire. Exceptions to this rule are at the sole discretion of the University when warranted by the specific circumstances and will be communicated to the employee at the time of termination.

An employee who is terminated for violating an employee conduct rule is also ineligible to maintain his or her Auburn University email account. Exceptions to this rule may be made at the sole discretion of the University for employees who are also enrolled students at the time of termination. Exceptions to this rule are dependent on the specific circumstances and will be communicated to the employee at the time of termination.

This policy does not supersede or abrogate any specific rights granted by the Faculty Handbook.

Forms: Corrective Action Form

III. EFFECTIVE DATE
January 18, 2021

IV. APPLICABILITY
Applicable to all categories of employees, including Administrative/Professional, Staff and Faculty.

V. POLICY MANAGEMENT

Responsible Office: Campus Relations

Responsible Executive: Associate Vice President, Human Resources

Responsible Officer: Executive Director, Campus Relations

VI. DEFINITIONS
N/A
VII. **POLICY PROCEDURES**
   N/A

VIII. **SANCTIONS**
   Failure to adhere to this policy may result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination.

IX. **EXCLUSIONS**
   N/A

X. **INTERPRETATION**
   Executive Director, Campus Relations