

Employee Conduct

Reviewed Date		Number	<i>HR0101</i>
Revised Date	<i>September 30, 2020</i>	Approved Date	<i>December 19, 1990</i>

Introduction

The Simcoe Muskoka District Health Unit is responsible for ensuring the agency is run as efficiently and effectively as possible through professional employees delivering programs and achieving our mandate. Accordingly, as ambassadors to the public, all employees are expected to conduct themselves in a professional, efficient and effective manner and not engage in misconduct detrimental to the agency, themselves, fellow employees, the public or their assigned duties.

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to inform Simcoe Muskoka District Health Unit employees, students, medical residents and volunteers of the conduct and performance expected of them and the actions to be initiated should they fall below these expectations.

Legislative Authority

The Common Law of Ontario
Labour Relations Act of Ontario
Employment Standards Act of Ontario

Policy Definitions and Interpretation

Policy

Employees are expected to comply with the health unit's standards/rules for acceptable conduct and work behaviour/performance. When an employee fails to conform to these standards, corrective progressive discipline may be an option utilized in specific circumstances, where it is deemed reasonable and practical to do so in lieu of termination, in order to afford employees the opportunity to correct unsatisfactory conduct and/or work behaviour /performance. It is the direct supervisor's responsibility to make employees aware of existing policies, rules, regulations and performance standards.

Employees shall conduct themselves in a professional and responsible manner and comply with SMDHU's standards/rules of acceptable conduct.

The following, although not an exhaustive list, are considered examples of acceptable and non-acceptable conduct. Notwithstanding, there are a number of common sense norms of behaviour that employees are also expected to adhere to that need not be outlined below as examples.

In interaction with other employees, management and the public, employees shall:

- Apply the highest standards of professionalism, integrity, ethics, technical competency and skill in the performance of assigned duties.
- Incorporate total honesty, approachability, fairness, caring, and courtesy in all situations and respond to the public in a friendly and helpful manner.
- Nurture an environment of mutual respect and trust.
- Avoid situations where there may be or where there may reasonably appear to be, a conflict between or among staff responsibilities to the health unit, clients, their profession, peers, the public at large, and any personal interests.
- Adhere to confidential, personal, sensitive information or documentation requirements in accordance with legislation and health unit policies.
- Respect all colleagues, clients and stakeholders in the workplace and the community and treat co-workers, colleagues, and the public with dignity and respect.
- Resolve all conflicts in a mature and professional manner and address disagreements or conflict constructively.
- Comply with all health unit policies, procedures and standards.
- Respect the right of others to make choices and to have opinions that reflect individuality and diversity.
- Recognize the importance of confidentiality in our interactions with people and in the retention of information entrusted to them.
- Report to work in a fit condition, not be under the influence of alcohol or drugs as outlined within policy HR 0108.
- Perform their work efficiently, effectively and professionally meeting reasonable standards of efficiency and work performance and in accordance with: agency standards, job expectations and requirements; plus applicable professional association standards of acceptable practice, commence and finish work at scheduled start times and end times.
- Refrain from verbal and physical abuse and assaults which may involve but are not limited to name calling, swearing, uttering threats, fighting or hitting.

In addition, under no circumstances shall employees:

- Be involved in any sabotage or willful damage to agency property or the property of other employees or the public.
- Engage in disobedient, insolent, insubordinate or uncooperative behaviour or fail to carry out any lawful requests, directives of agency management representatives.
- Have excessive absenteeism/lateness, therefore employees are to attend work on time and on a regular and consistent basis as scheduled.
- Be absent/leaving work without authorization or permission.
- Use the health unit's time or resources for personal use or gain.
- Use a weapon or bring one into the workplace.
- Sexually harass any other individual.
- Act aggressively which may involve but is not limited to open hostility, belittling or yelling.

- Partake in or be party to any theft or attempted theft or breach of trust at SMDHU or within the community.
- Falsify any records including time sheets or furnish false or incomplete information.
- Disregard or breach safety rules/policy/protocols.
- Engage in conduct at work or outside of work that is prejudicial to the interests or reputation of SMDHU.
- Partake in gross negligent or careless behavior.
- Use a leave of absence for other than the purpose for which it was granted including but not limited to sick and WSIB leaves.
- Fail to return to work immediately following the expiration of any leave of absence.
- Be involved in any other misconduct serious enough to warrant disciplinary action or discharge.

The Employer retains the right to dismiss an employee for just cause. The Employer's right to dismiss shall be deemed to include the right to suspend, demote or otherwise discipline an employee.

Procedures

Managers/Supervisors, in consultation with both their Vice President and Human Resources shall employ responsibility and judgment in deciding the degree of disciplinary action appropriate to the shortcoming or unacceptable conduct. Accordingly, dismissal, suspension, warnings or demotion require the support of Human Resources for the purpose of consistency and the department Vice President.

1. Depending upon the circumstances, if an employee demonstrates unsatisfactory conduct or work behaviour/performance, they may be given the opportunity and, if necessary, the assistance to correct their behaviour.
2. Disciplinary action will normally be initiated by the employee's direct Supervisor. However, SMDHU may inform an employee that it reserves its right to discipline pending further investigation and consultation.
3. Where there is no direct Supervisor on duty, another managerial staff may be called upon to initiate disciplinary action.
4. Should it be deemed necessary, and at the health unit's discretion depending on the circumstances, an employee may be suspended indefinitely with or without pay, pending further investigation and consultation.
5. The Simcoe Muskoka District Health Unit considers the following as an appropriate guideline in, corrective progressive disciplinary procedures:
 - Step 1: Verbal Warning
 - Step 2: Written Warning
 - Step 3: Suspension
 - Step 4: Discharge
6. The foregoing measures may be applied in sequence whether the misconduct is related or not. Notwithstanding, where the circumstances warrant, any measure of discipline, up

to and including discharge, may be invoked at any time. For example, a written warning, suspension or discharge may be the first step administered, given the seriousness of the offence.

7. In the interest of consistent application of discipline, managerial staff shall contact Human Resources to review the record and the intended course of action, prior to proceeding with any disciplinary action.
8. This policy will be consistently applied to all employees and will be fairly enforced.
9. In the event any employee, other than a nonunion probationary employee, is dismissed for cause, suspended, demoted or otherwise disciplined by SMDHU and the employee believes that they have not been justly dealt with, then they may file a grievance and follow the appropriate steps of the applicable SMDHU grievance procedure.

Related Policies

HR0305 - Grievance Procedure
HS0109 - Workplace Violence and Prevention

Related Forms

Final Approval Signature: _____

Review/Revision History:

September 2010 Policy Number Change – previous number B3.130

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