

**AMERICAN LIBRARY ASSOCIATION
PERSONNEL POLICY MANUAL**

Item Number 512

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PROGRESSIVE DISCIPLINE POLICY

Reviewed and
Reissued 6/03

Objectives

To provide a mechanism that will formally identify and resolve work related behavioral problems in a consistent, fair, and equitable manner while at the same time respecting the rights of the employee.

General

ALA employees are required to follow Association policies and procedures and to meet acceptable standards of conduct normally expected in an office environment.

Any employee who exhibits unacceptable behavioral problems or violates Association policy will be subject to discipline, which may range from verbal warnings to termination of employment.

Following is the normal sequence of steps that managers should follow while recognizing concern for the rights and interests of each employee and the ALA:

- STEP 1 - Verbal Warning by immediate Supervisor to employee and Human Resources
- STEP 2 - Written Warning to employee and HR (Corrective Action Form)
- STEP 3 - Probation and/or Suspension
- STEP 4 - Termination

Depending on the seriousness of the infraction, and at the discretion of the Supervisor/Unit Manager/Department Head, steps 1, 2 or 3 may be repeated or skipped. Each case is considered on an individual basis by the Supervisor/Unit Manager/Department Head. In the case of Probation, Suspension, or Termination, advice from Human Resources should be secured before any action is taken.

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Verbal Warning

The first step in resolving work related behavioral problems is usually for the supervisor to inform the employee of the infraction and request the employee to respond to the allegation or complaint. It provides the employee and the supervisor with an opportunity to verbally discuss problems and to determine when and how these problems can be corrected.

Written Warning

In documenting the infraction, the following outline should normally be followed:

- A) the specific nature of the violation or undesirable behavior, and the date of occurrence;
- B) previous discussion or discussions of this issue;
- C) previous disciplinary actions taken, if any;
- D) method or methods of discipline, if any;
- E) course of action to be taken in the future if the behavior is repeated; and,
- F) description of what constitutes improved behavior or conformance to policy and appropriate deadline.

The employee must review the memorandum and acknowledge, in writing, that he/she has read it.

This memorandum is to be placed in the employee's personnel file in Human Resources immediately after review and discussion with employee.

The employee is to receive a copy of the memorandum. Records documenting progressive disciplinary action steps will become a part of the

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employee's personnel file.

At least one written warning should precede probation, suspension, or termination unless the action is a serious breach of conduct. Such unacceptable conduct or behavior may include but is not limited to those listed under TERMINATION.

Probation/Suspension

After verbal and written warnings, or at the discretion of the manager (depending on the severity of the unacceptable conduct), a probationary period of 30 to 90 days or a suspension may be imposed upon the employee by the Supervisor/Unit Manager/Department Head.

Human Resources must be involved in the suspension process and the notice of suspension should take place in the Human Resources office whenever possible.

In some instances the Management may determine that an employee's actions are serious enough to require immediate action to protect the rights and interests of other employees or the Association resources. An employee may be suspended without pay pending the investigation of the causes of the offense and the accuracy of the allegations. If at the end of the investigation it is determined that the suspension is unfounded, then the employee may be reinstated with full back pay and all references to the allegations will be removed from the employee's personnel file. If, on the other hand, the allegations are found to have merit, the suspension will stand and all related records will become a part of the employee's personnel file.

Infractions that may result in suspension without pay include, but are not limited to:

1. Divulging personal employee information, financial payroll or computerized systems information.

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2. Engaging in illegal activities on the premises.
3. Financial Mismanagement

In addition, an employee may be suspended for any misconduct that the Supervisor/Unit Manager/Department Head deems to pose a substantial threat to the safety, well being or legal rights of other employees.

Termination

Termination is the final action taken when an employee repeatedly exhibits unacceptable work behavior and usually occurs when all steps outlined in the Progressive Discipline Action, up to and including suspension, have been taken.

For acts or infractions that are deemed extremely serious by the Department Head, the Association retains the right to discharge the employee at any time for any reason without prior notification. Serious infractions that may warrant immediate discharge might include, but are not limited to:

- 1 . Falsification of employment applications, time records, and other Association data or documents.
2. Working on the job while intoxicated or using or under the influence of illegal drugs.
3. Possessing dangerous or deadly weapons on Association property or while in the commission of Association duties.
4. Fighting on the office premises.
5. Abusing, defacing or destroying Association property or the property of co-workers.

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6. The unauthorized removal of property, which belongs to the Association, another employee, or a visitor.
7. Harassment (as defined by ALA Policy #509).

Poor Performance

Poor job performance is not generally viewed as requiring the progressive discipline described above. Typically, employees with serious deficiencies in their job performance are placed on probation for a period of 30 to 90 days prior to termination of employment.

NOTE: The above statements represent guidelines from which ALA reserves the right to depart. The Association at its sole discretion may modify or suspend or terminate the policy at any time, with or without notice. Final interpretation of this policy and provisions is the right of ALA.