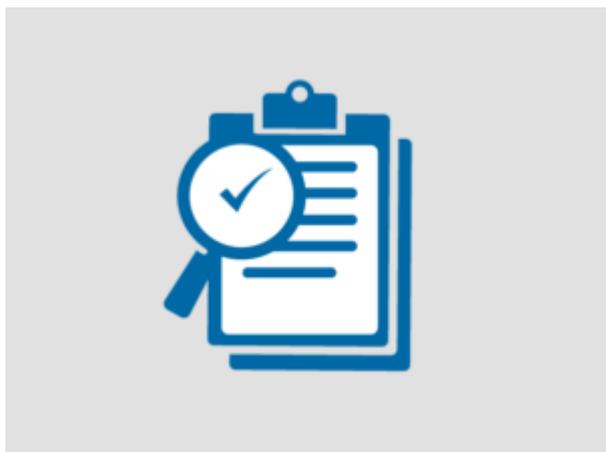


Suspension Policy



Start at the Beginning: The first step in this entire process involves developing policies related to discipline that include the option of suspension and/or termination. This should include identifying the types of actions, behaviours and performance issues that may result in suspension. Clearly identify behaviours or actions (such as illegal activities, harassment, theft, and fraud) which could lead to suspension or termination without prior notice or disciplinary steps.

Ensure Everyone has been Informed: Document that you have informed all employees of company policies and consequences of failure to follow these policies. Include these policies as part of the hiring process and have all new employees sign an agreement to indicate that they understand and have reviewed these policies.

Begin Documenting the Disciplinary Process as soon as Possible: Prior to suspension, you will need to take steps to show you have contacted and warned the employee, assisted the employee in correcting the problem, offered accommodations if relevant, and provided the employee an opportunity to change or explain his actions (unless you have previously identified the specific behaviours as subject to suspension without prior disciplinary actions). To this end, you should document:

- Your process of investigation, including details of the problem, witnesses to the offense, dates of incidents and other evidence you have gathered;
- Your disciplinary process, including all meetings with the employee and minutes of those meetings;
- Training, supervision, or corrective and supportive actions you have taken to assist the employee in addressing any workplace issues;
- Actions you have taken, including dates, to monitor and record ongoing performance;
- Warning letters that clearly inform the employee of performance concerns, timelines and consequences; and,
- Copy of the letter the employee has signed indicating awareness of the disciplinary process. If the employee has not signed a letter stating awareness of the process, this should be noted.

Implementing Suspension: As part of the suspension process you need to document:

- How and when you informed the employee (meeting date, who was present and what information was presented);
- That you offered an opportunity for accommodation;
- The length and timelines of the suspension, including start and end dates (1-2

days is common, 3-5 days may also be an option – beyond that, you may fall into constructive discipline territory);

- The process and time frame for appeal;
- Clear expectations for return to work behaviours;
- Consequences for failure to change or improve behaviours; and,
- Copy of the letter the employee has signed indicating the suspension notice has been read and understood. If the employee does not sign, this should be noted.

The Appeal Process: The process for appeal should be part of your organization's policies, and guidelines and should have been provided to the employee upon their employment. Documenting the appeal process includes the following:

- A copy of the notice (letter) of appeal. Note the date the appeal was received and place a copy in the employee's file;
- Note if there is no appeal received by the final date of appeal timeframe. Confirm with the employee that there is no appeal and note when this confirmation occurred;
- Each step of the appeal process, including participants, witnesses and gathered information; and,
- Outcome of the appeal, including a copy of the decision and proof that a copy was delivered to and received by the employee.

It's important to demonstrate your professional and serious approach when taking steps to suspend an employee. For an organized and methodical disciplinary process, create a chronological checklist of requirements and be sure to date and initial each step as it progresses. Suspension of an employee is often an uncomfortable and serious issue, but you can ease the process with consistent expectations, clear communication, and firm disciplinary procedures.