



FREEDOM SUPPORT NETWORK Disciplinary Policy

This policy is intended to set out the values, principles and policies underpinning Freedom Support Network's approach to staff discipline.

This policy is to be implemented by all Operations team members.

DISCIPLINARY POLICY

Policy Statement

All employers are unfortunately forced to administer discipline to staff at some point or another. This organisation believes that any disciplinary action taken should be aimed at identifying those problems that caused or contributed to the disciplinary action having to be taken, and to assist in correcting them. The organisation believes that it is in the interests of all, that disciplinary actions are carried out in a prompt, uniform and impartial way and that the main purpose of disciplinary action is to correct the problem, prevent its recurrence and prepare the employee for satisfactory service in the future.

Freedom Support Network adheres fully to the guidance about Compliance, which relates to the degree to which service users' rights and best interests are safeguarded by the organisation's policies and procedures. Freedom Support Network also adheres fully to the ACAS Code of Practice Disciplinary and Grievance Procedures.

Aim

The purpose of this policy is to ensure a fair and systematic approach to the enforcement of acceptable standards of conduct and behaviour amongst all staff and volunteers.

Staff Disciplinary Policy

In this organisation disciplinary action may be taken in response to one of the following:

1. Unsatisfactory performance at work
2. Improper behaviour at work
3. Persistent lateness or absenteeism
4. Misconduct.

In this organisation disciplinary action may take one of the following forms depending on the severity of the problem and the number of occurrences:

1. Verbal warnings

2. One or more written warnings
3. Suspension with or without pay
4. Dismissal.

At Freedom Support Network, the following procedure applies:

1. For offences other than serious or gross misconduct, the staff's immediate supervisor or line manager should first ascertain the facts and review any evidence relating to any breach of rules or discipline. The staff will be interviewed in private and should be asked for an explanation. The immediate supervisor or line manager will then decide upon a course of action.

2. If an informal, verbal warning is decided upon then this should be administered in private by the immediate supervisor or line manager and appropriate notes made in the staff's personnel file.

3. If a formal, written warning is required, because an informal warning has already been given for the offence or because of the severity of the offence, only a senior organisation manager or head of organisation should carry this out. Appropriate notes should be made in the staff's personnel file.

4. If the offence is repeated or agreed improvements are not made then a second and final written warning may be issued.

5. If standards improve and there is no repetition of the offence then the staff may request that the warning is removed from their file after 12 months. The organisation reserves the right to refuse to remove the offence from the file if it feels that the offence warrants or that there is a likelihood of further transgression.

6. A staff may be suspended without pay if the organisation deems them incapable of performing their duties or while investigations take place. A written copy of the suspension should be given to the member of staff by the head of organisation.

7. An employee may be dismissed if:

1. They have already received a final written warning and repeat the offence
2. They have been suspended and the organisation decides that, upon investigation, their offence merits dismissal
3. They have committed serious or gross misconduct
4. They have committed an offence that makes their continued employment impossible.

Freedom Support Network recognises that there are certain types of problem that are so serious they justify either a suspension or, in extreme situations, dismissal, without verbal or written warnings being given.

In this organisation the following apply.

1. Disciplinary matters should be dealt with quickly and fairly.
2. An indication should be provided of the disciplinary action that might be taken.
3. Supervisors or line managers can issue verbal warnings.
4. Only the head of organisation or senior organisation management can use written warnings and dismissal.

5. Employees should be told of the complaint against them and be given full opportunity to state their case before a decision is taken.
6. Employees have the right to be accompanied by a trade union representative or fellow employee of their choice.
7. Employees will not normally be dismissed for a first offence, other than gross misconduct.
8. No disciplinary action will be taken before there has been a full investigation.
9. An explanation of any penalty will be given.
10. Employees have a right of appeal.

Written warnings

Written warnings should state clearly:

1. The conduct concerned
2. The improvement required and the time limit for this if appropriate
3. The likely consequences of further offences or failure to improve (eg final warning, dismissal, etc).

The warning should be handed to the employee, who should be informed of the right of appeal.

Appeals

Appeals should not be pursued through the organisation's grievance procedure but should be made directly to the head of organisation. Where a final decision within the organisation is contested, or where the matter becomes a collective issue between management and a trade union, then appeals should be made via an external body such as ACAS.

Records

Records will be kept in the employee's personnel file detailing the nature of any breach of disciplinary rules, the action taken and the reasons for it, whether an appeal was lodged, its outcome and any subsequent developments. These records will be carefully safeguarded and kept confidential.

The organisation disciplinary policy should be included in the induction training for all new staff.

This policy will be reviewed by the Centre Coordinator/Service Manager.