

STANDARDS OF CONDUCT

I. INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this policy is to inform all managers and employees of their responsibilities regarding maintaining a positive and productive work environment. It also provides examples of important standards of conduct and performance that are fair and objective, and describes the procedures for taking corrective action, including disciplinary actions, which are consistent and appropriate.

Courteous, equitable, and reliable service to the public is the main purpose behind every policy and procedure of the Library. Always greet or acknowledge patrons as they enter the Library. Make your availability known to the patron before he/she has to ask for help. Following are some rules and guidelines for helping you deal effectively with the public and co-workers in your new position. If you have any questions, please feel free to ask.

II. STANDARDS OF CONDUCT AND PERFORMANCE

The following is not all-inclusive but is intended to illustrate certain minimum expectations for acceptable workplace conduct and performance. All employees shall comply with CCLD policies, procedures, rules, and directives. Employee performance and conduct should always reflect and support the mission and values of the Camden County Library District. Many of the standards of conduct and policies are readily understood and recognized as those that guide behavior anywhere in social or business relationships. Others are particularly applicable to employees working together at the Library.

A. Behavior Expectations

Trustworthiness

- Demonstrate the highest standards of personal integrity, truthfulness, and honesty in all job activities.
- Protect confidential information from inappropriate use. Respect patron privacy.

Respect

- Treat all individuals in a respectful, courteous, and professional manner.
- Honor the Library's responsibility to comply with State and Federal regulations.

Responsibility

- Uphold the public trust. Return patrons phone calls as promptly as possible.
- Conduct and perform job duties diligently and promptly.
- Make no promises of any kind which conflict with library policies.

Fairness

- Treat others with impartiality and equity and provide or accept no special favors or privileges that may be perceived as influencing the performance of one's duties. Find information for patrons that covers all sides of controversial topics.
- Impartially apply applicable laws, policies, and regulations to everyone.

Caring

- Create and maintain positive relationships with staff and patrons.
- Consider the consequences of decisions on those affected by them.
- Strive to find solutions to our patron's issues or problems and offer suggestions for Library improvement when appropriate.

Good Citizenship

- Make decisions that benefit the patron's interest consistent with Library policy.
- Engage only in activities that are consistent with the performance of one's duties.
- Comply with all laws, policies, and procedures applicable to the Library District.

B. Work Performance

Employees are expected to meet or exceed established performance standards. Conditions or circumstances as they become known which prevent employees from performing normally or completing assignments should be reported to the appropriate manager. Likewise, unclear instructions or procedures should be brought to the attention of the appropriate manager.

C. Use of Time

Employees are expected to devote their full attention to performing assigned responsibilities during their full work schedule, except for designated time provided for meals and breaks.

D. Use of CCLD Equipment, Facilities, and Information

CCLD equipment (all property owned, leased, or controlled by the CCLD, including but not limited to vehicles, computers, tools, devices, and materials), facilities, and information, are to be used only for work-related purposes unless otherwise authorized. Theft of CCLD property of any kind may result in criminal prosecution in addition to disciplinary action.

E. Attendance

Employees are expected to have timely and consistent attendance on the job. Planned use of leave time should be arranged and approved by the appropriate manager in advance. Unexpected use of leave time should be reported to the appropriate manager as promptly as possible within the time frame specified by the leave policy. Employees are expected to work any assigned overtime unless excused by the appropriate manager. For further information, see Section 1 subsection 26: Requests for Leave.

F. Conflict of Interest

Employees shall conduct CCLD business with the highest standards of integrity and shall not officially act in regard to any contract, transaction, or other matter in which the employee may have a personal interest, individually or through a family member. Employees shall not solicit nor accept nor receive any personal payment, gift, favor, service, or gratuity for the performance of their official duties. This should not be construed to prohibit acceptance of a token or memento for a particular occasion, the value of which is less than \$ 10.00, or honorarium for official CCLD recognition such as milestone anniversaries.

G. Honesty

Honesty is required in all aspects of employee conduct. Falsification, alteration, and misrepresentation are prohibited. This includes falsification of any CCLD or work-related documents, including but not limited to job applications, vouchers, time clock, leave requests, complaints, and reports. Also prohibited are verbal statements which are untruthful or which contain misrepresentations or omissions.

H. Safety

Camden County Library District has established safety rules, regulations, and procedures. Employees are required to know and observe all such rules, regulations, and procedures. Employees are required to observe all traffic laws while driving on library business. Employees in positions requiring a Commercial Driver's License (CDL) shall observe all laws and policies applicable to CDL holders.

Employees shall immediately report to their supervisor any situation or condition, such as the loss, suspension, revocation of a driver's license or any other job-related license or certification, or any condition which may interfere with the employee's regular performance of duties. The employee must inform CCLD of any condition which requires or may require CCLD to provide a reasonable accommodation or which may adversely affect or endanger others. Employees are also required to report the use of any doctor-prescribed medication, which is causing an impact on the ability to safely do their job. CCLD also requires employees to immediately notify their supervisor of any on-the-job injury or accident.

I. Outside Activities

CCLD does not prescribe employee conduct off-the-job. However, any conduct on or off-the-job, which affects the employee's credibility, effectiveness, performance, or ability to fully carry out the responsibilities of CCLD employment and/or any conduct which to CCLD is prejudicial to the interests, reputation, or operations of CCLD, is subject to disciplinary action.

J. Defamation

Defamation will not be tolerated under any circumstance. Public statements that may harm the reputation of the Library District, the Library Board, any staff member, or patron, whether it is through Social Media or by written or oral communication, may be cause for immediate termination of employment.

K. Reference Skills

Be a knowledgeable person. Keeping up on local, state, and national news and being familiar with books and authors, music, films, etc., enhances your ability to deal effectively with patrons who need information or advice on what to read. Show interest in every person's request. Don't try to show off to or show up the patron, no matter how trivial the request may seem. **NEVER answer a request for information without having a reliable source to back it up.** Cite the source where you found the information when answering a question.

Be sure you understand, as concisely as possible, what the patron is asking for. If you don't understand a subject area or need clarification, admit this to him/her. "I'm not sure I understand your question. Could you give me more information?" Always offer to write down a request and look further for the information needed or to inter-library loan material for the patron if information is not found within a reasonable length of time. Also advise patron of inter-library loan costs, if any.

L. Phone Etiquette

The patron present at the service desk always gets priority over a phone call. When answering the phone or when making a phone call, identify the Library and yourself. "(Your Branch) library – this is (your name), how may I help you?" is an example. When calling a patron – "Hello, is Mrs. Smith there? This is (your name) calling from the (your) Library. The book you requested is now available..."

Keep your mind on the phone conversation. NEVER try to do other things while you are on the phone. Do not try to help patrons at the desk while you are involved with a patron on the phone. If an in-house patron approaches you while on the phone, ask the phone patron to hold. If you can help the in-house patron quickly, do so, otherwise inform the phone patron that you will need to call them back. If the phone patron's need requires more than a 5 minutes discussion, get their name and number so you can call back when it is less busy at the desk. Or refer the caller's

question/need to someone else if necessary. If you need to put the caller on hold, explain what you are doing – and do not leave the caller on hold for more than 2-3 minutes before making contact again.

M. Miscellaneous rules

Limit the use of phones in public use areas (circ. desk and ref desk) for personal phone calls. If you get a personal call while on duty, make it as brief as possible. Make personal calls during breaks and lunchtime. **SPEAK QUIETLY AS YOU WORK.** Patrons will sense the atmosphere, and they are more likely to follow the lead, thus creating the feeling of quiet that is expected in a library.

- **SMOKING** is not allowed anywhere (including staff/break/meeting rooms) in any of Camden County Library District's buildings (owned or leased) by staff or patrons.
- **CHEWING GUM** while dealing with the public is not permitted.
- Personal conversations among staff members should be kept to a minimum except at break and lunchtime. **NEVER** talk about patrons or engage in "gossip" while on duty.
- Staff members are encouraged to "scan" new books to gain familiarity with the collection and current interest issues.
- Keep personal items such as coats, sweaters, purses, etc., in closets or drawers. Make it a habit to keep the Library looking neat and clean. Everyone can help by picking up trash from the floor, straightening chairs, and putting away books left on tables.
- Engaging in rude or unprofessional behavior or disorderly conduct even if the behavior is not expressly forbidden by regulation or law is strictly prohibited.
- Employees engaging in political activities, as defined by state law, while on duty or on CCLD premises are prohibited.
- Employees using their official authority to coerce or attempt to coerce a subordinate employee to pay, lend, or contribute anything of value to a political party, candidate, or campaign is prohibited. Employees may not discriminate against any employee or applicant for employment because of that person's political affiliations or participation in permitted political activities or failure to participate in political activities.
- Discriminating in the provision of CCLD services or responding to requests for such services based on the political affiliation or political activities of the person or organization for which such services are provided or requested is prohibited.
- Suggesting or implying that CCLD has officially endorsed a political party, candidate, or campaign is prohibited.

III. TYPES OF OFFENSES

The following offenses are only examples and are to be used as guidelines. Failure to correct behavior, performance, or conduct after the commission of a Group I or II offense will result in further progressive disciplinary action.

A. Group I Offenses

These offenses include behavior considered less severe in nature but which requires corrective action. The prescribed disciplinary action for Group I infractions is a written reprimand placed in the employee's personnel file. Depending upon the severity and nature of the infraction, the employee may be subject to verbal or written counseling instead of being cited for a Group I offense. Verbal and written counseling are not formal disciplinary actions and are not subject to the grievance process. Conversely, more severe or repeated acts of misconduct may result in a Group II or III offense. Examples of Group I offenses include:

- Unsatisfactory attendance or tardiness as defined by the attendance policy.
- Abuse of CCLD time, such as the use of CCLD time for a non-work-related activity or personal business.
- Unsatisfactory job performance; Disruptive behavior including rudeness or uncooperative attitude toward others.
- Failure to comply with the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA).
- Improper operation of a CCLD vehicle or equipment.

B. Group II Offenses

These offenses include types of behavior that are more severe in nature. The prescribed disciplinary action for each violation is a written reprimand placed in the employee's personnel file. It may also include a suspension without pay (1 – 10 days) with the concurrence of the Director. Examples include:

- Continued unsatisfactory job performance.
- Failure to follow a supervisor's verbal or written instructions, perform assigned work, or otherwise comply with applicable CCLD policy or procedures, except for refusal to cooperate concerning alcohol and drug testing, which is a Group III Offense.
- Failure to exercise good judgment or sound reasoning.
- Violating safety procedures (not a threat to life); Leaving the worksite without permission during work hours.
- Unauthorized sleeping or appearance of sleeping on the job.
- Failure to report to work as scheduled without proper notification.
- Violating patron or staff confidentiality CCLD policies/procedures.

- Use of obscene, offensive, or inappropriate language, conduct, or images when dealing with other employees, supervisors, or patrons.
- They have demonstrated significant performance deficiency.

C. Group III Offenses

The offenses in this group are most severe in nature. The prescribed disciplinary action is the termination of the employee. If the Director determines that extenuating circumstances exist and the employee otherwise has a satisfactory record of job performance and conduct, the Director has the option of imposing a 20 workday suspension without pay instead of termination. Examples include:

- Possession or use of firearms, dangerous weapons, or explosives while working or on any CCLD property, not including personal weapons kept in their locked vehicle.
- Withholding information, or making false or misleading statements; failing to cooperate fully during an administrative investigation, or interfering with an administrative investigation.
- Falsification, misuse, concealment, or alteration of records, including but not limited to incident reports, patron records, vouchers, monthly reports, time and leave records, or other CCLD documents.
- Negligent conduct by an employee which shows an intentional disregard for CCLD policies, interests, personal or public safety.
- Workplace harassment, retaliation, or other prohibited conduct covered under Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964.
- Behavior that is considered unethical or unprofessional conduct with patrons, contractors, or other employees.
- Overt or implied threats or coercing of employees, supervisors, subordinates, or patrons, including but not limited to incidents of bodily contact.
- Unauthorized possession or use of alcohol or a controlled substance by an employee on the job; or operating CCLD equipment, including vehicles, while under the influence of alcohol or drug as defined by Chapter 577 of the Missouri Revised Statutes.
- Positive drug or alcohol test while on the job; refusal to cooperate fully concerning alcohol/substance abuse testing policy as defined by CCLD's Substance Abuse Policy and Procedures will result in termination.
- Participating in or encouraging any strike, work slowdown, sitdown, or similar interference with CCLD operations.
- Acts of violence or fighting.
- Theft, actual or attempted, of CCLD assets, equipment, or the property of others.
- Deliberately destroying or reckless use of CCLD equipment or the property of others.
- Improper or unlawful conduct on or off the job which affects or tends to affect the employee's relationship to the job, or the employee's credibility, effectiveness, or ability to fully carry out the responsibilities of the position, or which negatively affects the image or operations of the Library District.
- Insubordination or the intentional refusal by an employee to comply with directions, instructions, policies, procedures, or a lawful order of an employee or supervisor with higher authority.

IV. CORRECTIVE ACTION GUIDELINES

Disciplinary action will be taken to correct or discourage unsatisfactory behavior or performance. The following principles will be observed when considering disciplinary action: Management shall consider previous disciplinary actions taken against the employee, including the date, severity, and circumstances of the prior steps. The corrective action shall be appropriate to the situation and shall be consistent with the expectations of the position. See Section 1, Subsection 5: Probationary Period and Disciplinary Actions Policy of the CCLD Policy Manual.

Management shall consider the unique needs of the department and the seriousness of the employee's behavior or performance. Employees are responsible and accountable for knowing the performance or behavioral expectations of the Library District. In determining the severity of the disciplinary action, the supervisor should consider whether there has been a repetition of the same or similar performance or behavior.

V. DISCIPLINARY PROCEDURES

Any alleged violation of the CCLD Personnel Conduct Standards, rules, policies, procedures, or continued failure to meet job performance standards or expectations shall be investigated. The Library shall provide the employee the opportunity to respond before disciplinary action is taken. Supervisors have flexibility in the investigation of disciplinary matters in a manner appropriate to the alleged misconduct. See Section 1, Subsection 5: Probationary Period and Disciplinary Actions Policy of the CCLD Policy Manual for further procedures.