

ARTICLE 21: DISCIPLINARY ACTION

Section 21.1 Disciplinary Actions

The objective of any disciplinary action is to correct less than satisfactory performance and to bring a worker's performance up to District standards. Disciplinary action is not primarily punitive in intent, but is intended to be corrective action.

The appointing authority may take disciplinary action against any employee, provided that the rules and regulations prescribed herein are followed and that employee who is not on probationary status has the right to appeal pursuant to this article, except as herein provided. As used in this article, "disciplinary action" shall mean formal written reprimand, suspension, disciplinary demotion, disciplinary probation, or dismissal. No employee shall be discharged or disciplined without just cause and the principles of progressive discipline shall be followed. Permanent employees shall be subject to disciplinary action by the General Manager only in accordance with the procedures set forth below.

As part of the District's progressive disciplinary process, an employee may be placed on disciplinary probation for a specified period of time not to exceed four (4) months for each instance, with the understanding that should the causes for such action not be satisfactorily corrected or remedied during the period, subsequent disciplinary action may be taken, up to and including termination.

Section 21.2 Notice of Disciplinary Action

In order to institute disciplinary action, the appointing authority shall serve notice of the proposed disciplinary action in accordance with the following procedures:

Except as otherwise provided herein or when emergency or other special circumstances require immediate action, a notice of proposed disciplinary action (other than for formal reprimand) shall be delivered to the employee, either personally or by the US Postal Service, to the current address listed on the employee's most recent personnel action form, no less than five (5) calendar days prior to the effective date of any punitive action against the employee.

The notice of proposed disciplinary action shall include the following:

- A. The nature of the disciplinary action;
- B. The effective date of the action;
- C. The causes for the action in ordinary, concise language with the dates and places thereof, when known;
- D. A statement that identifies the material upon which the action is based and states that it is available for inspection; and
- E. A statement advising the employee of his/her right to respond either verbally or in writing to the appointing authority or his/her designee imposing the disciplinary action prior to the effective date and the right to be represented in that response.

Section 21.3 Pre-Disciplinary Due Process Meeting

If the employee does not waive his/her right to a Skelly meeting, the General Manager shall conduct an informal meeting to allow the employee to respond to the charges made.

The employee may present information and respond to questions personally or through his/her representative.

The General Manager shall give the employee written notice of the decision which shall be reached within five (5) working days after said meeting.

Section 21.4 Implementation of Discipline

In the case of a suspension without pay of one (1) working days or less, or a suspension with pay of twenty (20) working days or less, the suspension may be imposed by a single notice containing items A, B, C, D & E above. This notice shall be delivered to the employee on or as soon after the effective date of the suspension as possible.

Except as provided above, in order to implement the proposed disciplinary action of a lesser disciplinary action based on the same cause(s), a notice of disciplinary action shall be delivered to the employee, either personally or by the US Postal Service to the current address listed on the employee's most recent Personnel Action form, on or before the effective date of the disciplinary action.

The notice of disciplinary action shall contain the information in items A, B, C, D & E above

and, in addition, shall include a statement as to the right to appeal and representation by a party

of his/her own choice and shall include a referral to the section of this Agreement concerning appeals from disciplinary action.

Section 21.5 Reprimand

An appointing authority may reprimand an employee by furnishing him/her with a statement, in writing, of the specific reasons for such reprimand. A copy of notice of the reprimand shall be given to the General Manager for inclusion in the employee's personnel file and shall not be subject to appeal, but the employee and/or his/her representative shall have the right to discuss the reprimand, or notice of reprimand during normal business hours, with the supervisor issuing the reprimand within 3 working days of receipt of reprimand.

Disciplinary reprimands shall be removed from the employee's personnel file after the second year of their issuance, upon the employee's request, and if the employee does not receive any further disciplinary action in the two year period.

Section 21.6 Appeal of Disciplinary Action

A . A p p e a l

If an employee who has had a pre-disciplinary due process (Skelly) meeting wishes to appeal the decision of the General Manager further, and who has completed his/her six (6) months probationary status, he/she shall file with the MCWD Board of Directors no later than the fifteenth (15th) day after receipt of said notice of disciplinary action.

Should said fifteenth (15th) day fall on a day in which offices of the MCWD are not open for business, the time within which said notice of appeal may be filed shall be extended until 5:00 p.m. of the next following day when MCWD offices are open for business.

B. Time of Hearing - Notice

A hearing by the MCWD Directors or by a Hearing Officer appointed by the Board, relating to the validity of the charges upon which the disciplinary action was based shall commence not later than thirty (30) days after the date of the filing of the notice of appeal.

The appellant employee shall be given not less than ten (10) days written notice of the date, time, and place of said hearing of the Directors or the Hearing Officer. Said notice of the date, time, and place of hearing shall be effective upon its deposit in the US mail, postage prepaid with return receipt requested, and addressed to the last known address of the appellant as set forth in the appellant employee's personnel file.

C. Conduct of Hearing

At the time and place designated, the MCWD Board of Directors or Hearing Officer shall hold a hearing for the purpose of determining the validity of the charges brought against the appellant employee and of the reasonableness of the discipline imposed pursuant to said charges. Such hearing shall be closed to the public unless otherwise requested by the appellant employee. The appellant employee may be present and have the right to be represented by counsel.

The hearing may be continued from time to time and at the end of such presentation the MCWD Board of Directors or Hearing Officer may take the evidence under consideration for a reasonable period of time before announcing its decision in the matter.

D. Hearing

The General Manager and the appellant employee may call witnesses, shall have the right of cross-examination and may present documentary and demonstrative evidence.

E. Recommendation of Hearing Officer

If a Hearing Officer is appointed by the MCWD Board of Directors, a non-binding advisory opinion or recommendation shall be presented in writing to the MCWD Board no later than ten (10) days after the hearing is complete.

F. Decision of MCWD Board of Directors

The decision of the MCWD Board of Directors shall designate express findings of the charges upon which the disciplinary action was based and may wholly reverse or affirm the disciplinary action imposed by the General Manager or modify the severity of the same.

Loss of Salary

If the discipline action of the General Manager is wholly reversed by the MCWD Board of Directors, or the severity of discipline imposed is partially reversed, the appellant employee shall be entitled, upon the decision of the Directors or Hearing Officer, to complete the partial reinstatement, as the case may be, and shall be entitled to reimbursement from MCWD funds of that salary forfeited by virtue of that portion of the disciplinary action which was overruled by the MCWD Board of Directors.

H. Appeals of Decision

The findings and decision of the MCWD Board of Directors on appeal shall be final and conclusive on all parties, and not subject to the grievance procedures provided for in this contract.