

## *Philosophy*

Cleveland Metroparks goal is for employees to be recognized for performance that *meets or exceeds* expectations and employees whose performance is below expectations *should be coached/consulted, provided a development plan and their performance corrected*. A Performance Management Program is used by the Park District to identify work plans and performance standards to evaluate performance. Supervisor responsibilities, employee's responsibilities, rules of conduct and progressive discipline, a "Significant Incident Report" and a dispute resolution process are described below.

## *Supervisor Responsibilities*

A role of the immediate supervisor is to recognize employee performance which *meets or exceeds* expectations and to coach/consult and provide a development plan when employee performance is below expectations. The immediate supervisor will use the progressive disciplinary process to correct minor work rule infractions. The supervisor will utilize the "Significant Incident Report" (F501A) to recognize employee performance judged to "exceed expectations." The "Significant Incident Report" will also be used beginning at the *verbal* warning step of the progressive disciplinary process to document employee performance which requires improvement or to document an employee's work rule violation.

Before suspension of any employee, if possible, a supervisor will consult with the next level supervisor. Before discharging any employee, the immediate supervisor will consult with the department director and the Director of Human Resources.

## *Employee Responsibilities*

Each Park District employee is expected to perform work in a professional manner, obey work rules, share knowledge with others and be a team player. Initially a dispute should always be addressed with the employee's immediate supervisor initially. Every employee is viewed as an integral member of the Cleveland Metroparks work team.

## *Rules of Conduct*

To operate efficiently and productively, every organization requires rules of expected conduct which are well communicated and understood by all employees. The following rules are established to maintain safe and efficient operation of Cleveland Metroparks. They serve the best interest of all employees and will be administered fairly and equitably. These rules apply to all employees, whether they work on or off premises. Failure to observe these rules will result in discipline.

Discipline generally is a means to instruct or train, *allowing the employee the opportunity to modify behavior*. The Park District views disciplinary action as a means of preventing a recurrence of misconduct. These rules should be considered as representative rather than an all-inclusive code of conduct for which disciplinary action, ranging from verbal warning to immediate discharge, will be taken. These rules may be amended from time-to-time. It is understood that situations may arise that are not specifically covered by these rules, and that Cleveland Metroparks retains the right to take appropriate disciplinary action in such situations. Discipline of union-represented employees is covered by the applicable collective bargaining agreement. It is the responsibility of every employee to know and follow these rules.

A. The following is a partial list of conduct which will generally subject an employee to progressive discipline (warnings, suspension, or discharge). This is not all-inclusive.

1. Horseplay, practical jokes, or using abusive language to any employee on Park District property.
2. Gambling or conducting gambling activities on Park District property.
3. Excessive absenteeism and/or tardiness.
4. Violations of any security rules or procedures.
5. Unsatisfactory work performance.

*Rules of Conduct  
(continued)*

6. Unauthorized posting or removal of notices on Park District property.
7. Involvement in a chargeable accident causing personal injury or damage to equipment, merchandise or property.
8. Violation of safety, sanitary rules or work procedures.
9. Misuse or unauthorized removal of Park District records or confidential information of any nature from its premises.
10. Failure to properly operate and maintain equipment; failure to keep equipment clean and in good repair; failure to maintain storage areas in a clean and orderly manner.
11. Making or publishing false or malicious statements concerning any employee, supervisor, Park District officer, the Park District, or its services or products.
12. *Misuse* of the Park District telephone, pager, e-mail, fax, internet or intranet.
13. *Use of personal cellular phone during work time.*
14. Resting, loitering, or engaging in unauthorized visiting during work time.
15. Improper dress, uniform, or poor personal hygiene and grooming.
16. Improper disposal of Park District property.
17. Failure to report an absence.
18. Smoking in unauthorized areas.
19. Unauthorized use of Park District equipment for personal

***Rules of Conduct  
(continued)***

use or gain.

20. Visiting or stopping at unauthorized places while traveling in the performance of Park District business.
21. Having unauthorized riders in Park District vehicles.

B. The following is a partial list of conduct which will generally subject an employee to disciplinary action up to and including immediate discharge. This list is not all-inclusive.

1. Deliberately damaging or defacing Park District, co-worker and/or visitor property or the deliberate commission of acts which otherwise, directly or indirectly, cause damage or loss to the Park District or to the property of others.
2. Dishonesty of any kind. Attempted or accomplished theft or fraudulent taking of Park District property or property of fellow employees, customers or Park District visitors.
3. Fighting or threatening physical harm.
4. Carrying *a concealed weapon/firearm or any other weapon* unless required by your position.
5. Immoral conduct or indecency on Park District property on or during performance of Park District duties or on Park District time.
6. Falsification of information on employment application or other records whether by commission or omission, regardless of when discovered.
7. Absence without notifying the Park District for three (3) consecutive days may be considered a voluntary resignation.

## *Rules of Conduct (continued)*

8. Refusing to accept work assignments (i.e. last order given) or work locations as assigned by a supervisor.
9. Sleeping during work time.
10. Conviction of any felony or serious misdemeanor.
11. "Padding time," making false statements of any kind or type regarding work produced or hours worked, *related to yourself and or another employee*, including leaving the job early without supervisor approval.
12. Insubordination, including use of abusive language or profanity toward supervisor(s).
13. Failure to immediately report Park District-related accidents to supervisor(s), including damage to Park District equipment or property of the Park District.
14. Giving false testimony or reports with respect to accidents or any other incident being investigated pertaining to the Park District rules or business.
15. Violation of the Park District's Substance Abuse Policy.
16. Working another job while absent on scheduled workdays.
17. Sexual or any other form of harassment.

## *Progressive Discipline*

Progressive discipline is a method used by the Park District to warn and counsel employees for violation of work rules, which do not generally require immediate discharge. *The typical steps in the progressive discipline process are as follows:*

1. A first offense would *normally* result in a verbal warning.

2. A *second offense* would generally result in a supervisor preparing a written warning.
3. A third offense may cause a paid or unpaid suspension of employment (generally one (1) to three (3) days *or greater depending upon the nature of the offense*).
4. A fourth offense *may result in the discharge of the employee who made the offending action(s)*.

Depending on the seriousness of the violation, progressive discipline may begin with a written warning, or with a suspension. Previous disciplinary record will also be considered in establishing discipline. *The use of progressive discipline does not alter the employee's at-will status of employment.*

### ***Dispute Resolution***

Cleveland Metroparks dispute resolution process provides a vehicle to address employee grievances. A dispute may result from any action deemed by the employee to be in conflict with Park District policies and practices. If no policy or practice exists, but the employee believes an action to be unfair and/or not in keeping with the mission of Cleveland Metroparks, the employee may use the dispute resolution process. Employees at the director level serve at the sole discretion of the Board and have no recourse to the dispute resolution process.

A dispute shall first be addressed through a scheduled discussion with the employee's immediate supervisor.

#### ***Step I***

If the dispute is not resolved with the immediate supervisor, the employee may prepare a written appeal within five (5) working days using the Dispute Resolution Appeal form (F501B). A copy will be forwarded to the employee's next level supervisor and the department director. If the next level supervisor is the department director, the form will *only* be sent to the department director. If the next level supervisor is the Executive Director-Secretary, the form will be sent to the Director of Human Resources and the Executive Director-Secretary. A meeting generally will be held *within* five

#### ***Step II***

(5) working days after receipt of the Dispute Resolution Appeal form to discuss the respective merits of the dispute. The employee, immediate supervisor and next level supervisor will attend the Step II meeting. A written answer will be sent to the employee within five (5) working days after the meeting by the most senior supervisor in attendance.

***Step III***

If the dispute is not resolved to the employee's satisfaction, the employee may send a written appeal within five (5) working days after receipt of the Step II answer to the Director of Human Resources and the Executive Director-Secretary. A meeting will be held to discuss the respective merits of the dispute within five (5) working days after receipt of the dispute Resolution Appeal form. The employee, immediate supervisor, department director and the Executive Director-Secretary and/or the Director of Human Resources will attend this meeting. A written answer generally will be sent to the employee within five (5) working days after the meeting by either the Executive Director-Secretary or the Director of Human Resources. The decision of the Executive Director-Secretary is final. The employee can choose to submit a statement which will be attached to the Dispute Resolution Appeal form which is filed permanently in the employee's personnel file.

Time limits are set forth to indicate urgency to resolve disputes. It is understood that schedules of the parties may not permit total adherence. Therefore, the time limits may be extended mutually by both parties and confirmed in writing or unilaterally by Cleveland Metroparks.

***Significant  
Incident Report***

A "Significant Incident Report" (F501A) is a tool used by supervisory staff to record employee performance which is judged to exceed expectations or judged to be outstanding. This report is also used to warn and counsel an employee whose work is judged to be below expectations or when an employee has violated a work rule(s). The Department of Human Resources forwards a copy of a Significant Incident Report, warning/counseling, to the designated union representative of an

employee's bargaining unit.

Also See: Professional Standards (8-1 to 8-4) Cleveland  
Metroparks Ranger Department Critical Policies  
Manual

Tardiness Policy for CMEA Employees  
*Sexual and other forms of harassment (503)*

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