

Employee Counseling

Index Code: 302.4

Effective Date: 01/15/10 (Revised 6/11/18)

I. Purpose

The purpose of this directive is to provide supervisory personnel with the authority to impose counseling in response to employee performance or behavioral issues.

II. Policy

It is the policy of the Office of the Sheriff to establish and maintain a system for tracking, reviewing, and responding to employee actions that pose a potential risk to employees, the Office of the Sheriff, and the public. In addition to punitive actions such as fines and suspensions, counseling can be a helpful tool in assessing employee performance and providing intervention where appropriate.

III. General Guidelines

A. Whenever a complaint is received, whether originating internally or from the community, the Office of the Sheriff will respond, thoroughly investigate the incident, and determine if any necessary punitive or non-punitive actions are required.

B. Ideally, employee counseling is conducted as soon as possible following the behavior, performance or incident. All counseling sessions will be documented.

C. Counseling may be conducted by any supervisor in the employee's chain of command. When possible, especially in sessions with cross genders, the counseling should be conducted with an unbiased third party as a witness.

D. Counseling may be used for supervisor-initiated correction of observed subordinates' actions. Examples of when counseling may be appropriate include; employee lateness; disruptive comments or behavior; failure to respond to calls promptly; speeding or improper parking in a police vehicle; or other minor

infractions that should be pointed out and corrected immediately.

E. Counseling may be used, at the discretion of the employee's division commander and Chief Deputy, for minor citizen-generated complaints where, after initial inquiry or after the conclusion of an internal investigation, the division commander and Chief Deputy determine the incident does not warrant formal disciplinary action. Examples of when counseling may be appropriate for citizen-generated complaints include complaints of inappropriate conduct which do not rise to a level requiring formal disciplinary action and complaints about an officer's attitude or demeanor.

F. Employees will be counseled at the conclusion of any rating period to include the results of the performance evaluation just completed and their goals for the next rating period to include advancement possibilities, specialization and future training needs.

G. Counseling may be used to address any poor performance identified during the last rating period, or any performance expected for the next rating period

IV. Procedures

A. Supervisors will make an initial inquiry by listening to complainants, through personal observation, and/or by listening to other employees, and then determine whether the incident, if true, should be handled through the formal disciplinary process or through the use of counseling.

B. If the complaint originates from a citizen, the supervisor will inform the complainant that the complaint will be documented, investigated fully and the complainant will be notified of the results.

C. During a counseling session, the particular infraction will be discussed by the

counselor, pointing out specific deficiencies in the employee's performance, behavior, or attitude. Employees will be given a chance to express their views, verbally and/or in writing, regarding the incident which led to the counseling session, and to develop and recommend corrective measures. If the employee disagrees with the reason for counseling, or the action taken, the employee may document their disagreement. Record of the counseling shall be maintained in the employee's personnel file including existing electronic files to afford the employee the opportunity to view and record their comments.

V. CALEA References: 35.1.7a, 35.1.7b & 35.1.7c.

VI. Proponent Unit: Administrative Services

VII. Cancellation: Index Code 302.4 dated 10/31/16.

Sheriff Gary Hofmann