

# INTEROFFICE MEMORANDUM

**To:** Civilian Supervisors  
**FROM:** Tim Young, Labor Relations Director  
**RE:** *Employee Counseling Documentation*

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In the initial instance, it is up to the supervisor to decide whether to counsel an employee about a particular work problem or to attempt actual discipline. (The Labor Agreement with Local 251 provides that an employee must be counseled for “minor violations” before actual disciplinary action is taken – Article 4, Section 1.) Obviously, this decision is governed by the severity of the work problem. When the supervisor chooses to counsel the employee, it is important that the counseling be documented. Should the problem not be resolved by the counseling, and disciplinary measures become necessary, a written documentation of the previous counseling serves two purposes: 1) it provides written proof that prior counseling has taken place; and 2) it provides a quick method of recalling details of prior poor performance, and thus allows the supervisor to testify from facts.

For counseling to be effective, it is necessary that it be specific, accurate, factual, and lead to concrete proposed solutions. Record your observations. If you are relying on what another employee has told you, note that on the form. Attach a written communication from the other employee. Be accurate in noting your statement of the problem and the employee’s response. Whenever possible, state the facts, not your opinion. When you do state your opinion, outline the factual observations that lead you to that opinion.

To achieve these goals, the attached “Supervisor Documentation of Employee Counseling” form should be used when you counsel an employee. You should keep the original of the form and give the employee a copy. Your department director or division manager may request that you submit copies to him or her. When you **discipline** an employee, you should forward any counseling documentation form to the Labor Relations Office along with the discipline.

Enclosures