

CITY PERSONNEL POLICY

EMPLOYEE COUNSELING DOCUMENTATION

Policy # 10-00

Approved by Personnel Board: 8/26/99

Michele Frost, Personnel Director

Approved by City Council: 4/4/00

Council President Paul Koneck

Pursuant to the Omaha Municipal Code, Section 23-65, the following is declared to be the policy of the City of Omaha. Please check the City's e-mail system in the Public Folders under Personnel Department for the latest amendments to this policy.

It is the responsibility of the supervisor to pursue the appropriate course in dealing with employee work performance. A supervisor may counsel an employee about a particular work problem or 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—see Article 4, Section 1). Obviously, this decision is governed by the severity and frequency of the work problem. When the supervisor chooses to counsel the employee, it is important that the counseling be documented. Employees should be reminded that counseling is not disciplinary action. 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 that the employee has been made aware of the problem; 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 identify concrete proposed solutions. Supervisors should record their observations of the employee's behavior. If relying on what someone else has said, that should be noted on the form. If possible, attach a written communication from the reporting person. Whenever possible, state the facts, not an opinion or conclusion. When stating an opinion, outline the factual observations that lead to that opinion.

Supervisors should keep the original of the form and give the employee a copy. Department directors or division managers may request a copy as well. No further distribution of this form is required. This form will not be placed in the Personnel Department's official personnel file. When recommending discipline for an employee, all counseling documentation forms should be forwarded to the Labor Relations office along with the proposed discipline. Supervisors are expected to use counseling forms provided by the Personnel Department.

Supervisors may contact the Labor Relations Director for assistance in this process.