

**Governor's Office of Homeland Security
and Emergency Preparedness
State of Louisiana**

JOHN BEL EDWARDS
GOVERNOR



JAMES B. WASKOM
DIRECTOR

**Standards of Behavior Policy
Policy Number: HR-0006**

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Approval:


James B. Waskom, Director

I. POLICY:

Employees of the Governor's Office of Homeland Security and Emergency Preparedness (GOHSEP) are to conduct themselves in a professional and ethical manner at all times while carrying out their duties and responsibilities as employees of the agency. This includes off-duty behavior that may impact an employee's performance while on duty and/or impact the reputation of the agency.

II. PURPOSE

This policy establishes the standards of behavior that GOHSEP demands from its employees, provides procedures for employees to report violations, and provides standard discipline guidelines to be considered when addressing violations of this policy.

III. APPLICABILITY

This policy applies to all GOHSEP employees and GOHSEP contractors.

IV. STANDARDS OF BEHAVIOR

A. In carrying out their official duties and responsibilities or appear to be representing GOHSEP, all employees shall:

1. Read, understand and conform to all GOHSEP rules, regulations, policies, and procedures.

2. Exercise good judgment in the performance of all assigned duties and responsibilities.
3. Carry out all lawful directions given by a supervisor.
4. Report as soon as possible to their immediate supervisor any unusual occurrence or other matter that may adversely affect the operation of GOHSEP or safety of employees.
5. Report as soon as possible to their immediate supervisor any arrest by a law enforcement agency, whether on misdemeanor or felony charges, and any conviction.
6. Secure and protect GOHSEP property, vehicles, equipment, and items of identification against damage or loss.
 - a. Report any damage or loss according to GOHSEP procedures.
 - b. Do not lend, give away, or appropriate for personal use any agency property, equipment, or items of identification without proper authority.
 - c. Drive or operate GOHSEP vehicles in a safe manner.
7. Deliver to the proper authority any monies or valuables which come into possession through the performance of official duties.
8. Avoid using their employment or standing in the GOHSEP in any commercial or private enterprise for the purpose of personal gain.
9. Abide by the Louisiana Code of Governmental Ethics, including which employees should not engage in any business relationship with applicants or potential applicants, including attorney-client relationships. Report as soon as possible to the GOHSEP Executive Counsel all potential ethics violations personally or seen by other GOHSEP employees or contractors.
10. Treat all persons in a respectful and courteous manner while on duty.
11. Avoid using coarse, profane, or insulting language.
12. Refrain from threatening, defaming or demeaning any individual.
13. Refrain from subjecting any person to any kind of harassing behavior.
14. Be truthful in written and oral GOHSEP communications.

- a. Not falsify any report or record.
 - b. Provide full and accurate information when requested by a supervisor.
15. Refrain from smoking within any GOHSEP facility or vehicle.
16. Refrain from engaging in political campaigning while on duty in accordance with *GOHSEP Political Activity Policy HR-0027*.
17. Avoid making public statements or providing information to citizens, community groups or the press regarding GOHSEP matters without specific authorization.
18. Conform to the *GOHSEP Dress Code Policy HR-0005*.
19. Report for work on time each scheduled workday and remain at work during all scheduled work hours in accordance to *GOHSEP HR-0003 Time Attendance and Work Hours Policy*.
 - a. Provide notice in accordance with GOHSEP procedures regarding any absence or late arrival.
 - b. Provide documentation in accordance with GOHSEP procedures regarding unscheduled absences.
20. Maintain current address, telephone, and 24-hour emergency information with your supervisor and report any changes within 24 hours.
21. Refrain from reporting to work under the influence of drugs or alcohol, and do not report to work while taking prescribed medication that may impair performance or safety.
22. Refrain from using any drug or controlled substance illegally, whether on or off duty.
23. Comply with *GOHSEP Firearms Policy GEN-0004*.
24. Refrain from recommending any private sector business to GOHSEP customers.
25. Personal Use of Social Media:
 - a. Although free to express themselves as private citizens on personal social media sites, as public servants, GOHSEP employees are reminded that, their social media postings may have a connection

back to and affect their employment relationship with GOHSEP. Furthermore, such postings may be personal in nature and not necessarily a matter of public concern. For this reason, employees should exercise caution in posting on personal social media sites since the First Amendment may not protect the content of their postings as free speech.

- b. Employees are prohibited from engaging in personal social media activities during work hours or via the use of GOHSEP computers/services. Use of personal cell phones or other electronic devices to access personal social media sites should be limited to break periods.
- c. Employees are prohibited from using a GOHSEP email address when registering for or participating in social media.

V. PROCEDURES

A. Reporting Requirements

1. Employees who are aware of, or identify violations of, agency policies or procedures, suspected dishonest acts or unethical behavior should report these to their immediate supervisor or any supervisor in their chain of command. If the suspected violation is a performance issue only and does not amount to unethical, dishonest, discriminatory or harassing behavior, appropriate action may be taken by the Section Chief or higher level position. Prior to any action, the Section Chief or higher level position shall review the situation and proposed action with the Grants and Administration, Employee Relations Administrator or the Director's designee to ensure consistency across the agency in applying discipline.
2. Any supervisor who knows of or receives information concerning a suspected violation will report the violation through his/her chain of command. Any suspected violation that is more than a work performance issue and involves unethical, dishonest, discriminatory or harassing behavior, shall be reported to the appropriate Assistant Deputy Director or higher level supervisor for review.
3. The Assistant Deputy Director will review the information and take appropriate action. If the violation is of such a nature as to require disciplinary action outside the authority of the Assistant Deputy Director, the suspected violation shall be reported to the Deputy Director, Chief of Staff. Prior to any action, the Deputy Director, Chief of Staff or Assistant Deputy Director shall review the situation and proposed action with the Grants and Administration, Employee Relations Administrator or the

Director's designee to ensure consistency across the agency in applying discipline.

4. If the Assistant Deputy Director deems the matter to be of a more serious nature, he/she will refer the issue to the Deputy Director, Chief of Staff for review.
 5. The Deputy Director, Chief of Staff, will determine what level of investigation is required and assign appropriate staff members to the investigative team.
 6. The investigating team will provide the Deputy Director, Chief of Staff, with an investigative report detailing all pertinent information concerning the suspected violation. The Deputy Director, Chief of Staff, will render a finding of facts based on the information provided by the investigating team, and, in consultation with the Grants and Administration, Employee Relations Administrator or the Director's designee, impose appropriate disciplinary action. If the violation warrants termination, the Deputy Director, Chief of Staff, will make a recommendation to the Director for action.
 7. The Deputy Director, Chief of Staff, or the Assistant Deputy Director will present the findings and disciplinary action to the employee if required. If disciplinary action is imposed, the employee shall receive written notification specifying the facts, which support the action and the discipline to be imposed.
 8. The employee who is the subject of any disciplinary action may appeal the action to the next level supervisor in the chain of command who imposed the discipline within five (5) business days of receipt of written notice of the action.
- B. Factors to be considered in determining severity of disciplinary action:
1. Impact on work environment and other employees.
 2. Extent of damage to agency property or the property of others.
 3. Extent of disruption or impairment of service.
 4. Severity of infraction.
 5. Employee's work history.
 6. Previous infractions (past three years).

C. Disciplinary Actions

The following are disciplinary actions, which may be taken, listed in order of severity with the least severe action listed first:

Imposed by Section Chiefs or immediate supervisor if a higher level:

1. Verbal warning or counseling (does not become part of official agency personnel file; appeal to Section Chief or immediate supervisor if higher level)
2. Written Reprimand (part of official agency personnel file; appeal to immediate supervisor if a higher level)

Imposed by Assistant Deputy Directors or immediate supervisor if a higher level:

3. Temporary, short-term pay reduction (formal action; appeal to the Deputy Director, Chief of Staff)
4. Suspension (formal action; appeal to the Deputy Director, Chief of Staff)

Imposed by Deputy Director, Chief of Staff:

5. Permanent pay reduction (formal action; appeal to GOHSEP Director)
6. Demotion (formal action; appeal to GOHSEP Director)
7. Removal from position (formal action; appeal to GOHSEP Director)

Imposed by GOHSEP Director:

8. Termination of employment (requires GOHSEP Director's approval; appeal to GOHSEP Director)

The immediate supervisor or supervisor of a higher level may execute the disciplinary action on behalf of the Section Chief or higher level supervisor. When executing discipline, supervisors are to follow progressive discipline unless actions require more severe discipline such as offenses against individuals and unethical behavior. All disciplinary action shall be discussed with the Grants and Administration, Employee Relations Administrator or the Director's designee **prior to imposing discipline** in order to assure discipline imposed is appropriate and consistent throughout the agency.

If an employee is uncomfortable with making a report of a violation of this policy to his/her supervisor or other individuals in the chain of command, the

employee may make the report of violation to the Grants and Administration, Employee Relations Administrator or the Director's designee.

Any person who retaliates against a person for making a report of suspected violation of this policy shall be subject to discipline up to and including termination.

VI. RESPONSIBILITIES

All employees must comply with all aspects of this policy.

VII. QUESTIONS:

Questions regarding this policy should be directed to the immediate supervisor or as otherwise directed by this policy.

VIII. VIOLATION:

Employees found to have violated this policy may be subject to disciplinary action up to and including termination.