Policy Name: Corrective Action Policy  
Policy Number: HR 1.14

Effective Date: August 27, 2019

Responsible Officer: Human Resources Director  
Board Approval Date: August 27, 2019

Policy Statement: Piedmont Health Services has established rules that allow for a fair, equitable and uniform handling of employee misconduct and the application of discipline.

Overview: The goal is to guide the employee to correct performance or behavior by identifying the problems, causes and solutions, not to punish the employee. As violations of established performance and conduct rules can ultimately lead to discharge, records are maintained of warnings and other corrective actions taken. The degree and type of action taken shall be based upon the sound and considered judgement of the Human Resources Department in accordance with this policy. This process in no way limits or alters the at-will employment relationship between PHS and its employees.

THE PRE-CORRECTIVE ACTION PROCESS

Collaborative Discussion

The Collaborative Discussion is a precursor to the Corrective Action Process. It encourages managers to establish and communicate the use of the corporate “open door” policy that promotes conversation between them and their direct reports. This process should, thereby, decreases the number of Corrective Actions administered because a system is in place that encourages employees to have a conversation in advance of any pending or upcoming events such as appointments, family issues and/or any other conflicts that may impede job performance (e.g., attendance). This likewise, encourages managers to initiate discussions with their direct reports at the sign of conduct or performance that may lead to Corrective Actions. This process helps establish shared commitment between management and their direct reports.

Procedures:

- Employee should be encouraged to contact manager for a timely, private, face-to-face meeting during which the employee will fully inform manager of any possible pending or upcoming events that might impact job performance.
- Conversely, manager should initiate a meeting with employee at the sign of behavior that may lead to an infraction. Meeting should have the constructive goal of soliciting feedback from the employee on ways to address the potential problem. Manager should provide input on possible resolutions, as well.
- Discussion is documented for Manager’s records. However, a copy is not submitted to Human Resources.

Note: If the employee fails to provide advance notification to manager and performance or
conduct issues ensue as a result, it may be necessary to proceed to the Corrective Action Process, depending on the severity of the infraction.

THE CORRECTIVE ACTION PROCESS

The Corrective Action process is intended to provide tools for addressing employee conduct and performance issues in a reasonable, consistent and effective manner. The corrective action process typically will, however, may not always follow in a progressive sequence including Constructive Counseling, Performance Improvement Plan, Final Written Warning or Termination. A corrective action is issued for just cause, i.e., failure to follow policies and procedures.

PHS uses a system of corrective action and may, at its sole discretion, utilize whatever form is deemed appropriate under the circumstances, up to and including termination. Corrective action is a process of communicating with the employee to improve behavior or performance after other methods such as collaborative discussion and constructive counseling have not been successful.

Corrective action may be taken against a PHS employee when their work conduct, performance or attention to or compliance policies, regulations, procedures, and processes do not meet expectations. Violation of work rules, instances of unacceptable behavior or misconduct or continued poor performance will be subject to progressive corrective action. This means that employees will be subject to the corrective action process that will become increasingly severe each time an offense is repeated or a performance improvement is not forthcoming. However, some types of misconduct are so intolerable that they can result in termination at the first occurrence.

A. Constructive Counseling is used if the Collaborative Discussion process is not working. It is designed to improve performance/conduct prior to using corrective action. The counseling discussion is intended to have the constructive goal of providing feedback to the employee to correct a problem(s) and reach an understanding on a constructive counseling action. This process promotes Piedmont Health’s shared values. It also elicits interpersonal relationships, open communication, trust, feedback and discussions about matters of importance or concern to an employee.

Procedures:

The constructive counseling process is a meeting held between the manager and the employee. It should focus on a specific incident, a particular aspect of an employee's general work performance which the manager has identified as needing improvement or the employee's overall performance or conduct. A successful constructive counseling process should include the following:

- Advance preparation or planning to outline the problem area(s) and develop concrete suggestions for improvement;
- Contact a member of Human Resources for assistance in or review of draft constructive counseling document (see sample in Appendix);
- Conduct a timely, private, face-to-face meeting with direct report to fully inform the employee of expectations with the constructive goal of providing feedback to the employee to correct the problem. Be prepared, have the facts in hand prior to the meeting. Devote sufficient time to the meeting allowing for an opportunity for an exchange of information. Also, be sure to:
  - State the effect of the problem on the work environment or on the employee's performance. Describe specific, observable, measurable and/or unacceptable conduct
  - Ask for the individual's perception of the problem and what is causing it. Encourage the employee to speak freely, candidly and listen to the information given. Keep an open mind
  - Ask the employee for potential solutions after you have explained what acceptable work is; consider all options.
  - Make sure both parties (manager and employee) know what is expected of each other.
• Identify follow-up steps and dates.
• Prepare Constructive Counseling Memorandum (refer to sample in Appendix) following the counseling discussion to clarify or emphasize certain points.
• If necessary, manager should provide suggestions, as well. Give the employee a reason to improve their job. Offer suggestions such as (for example, EAP) to help the employee improve/change conduct.
• Reach an understanding on a Constructive action.

✔ Following the meeting, place a written memorandum summarizing the discussion in employee’s departmental file or maintained for manager’s records (note: employee should be made aware that document will be placed in file prior to the session)
✔ Schedule meeting(s) following initial discussion to review performance. Recognize improvements that have occurred
✔ Incorporate unacceptable work performance into the performance review.

Failure to Improve Performance

• Typically, if an employee has been in two counseling discussions without improvement, it is time to move to more progressive corrective action. Please contact Human Resources if the Constructive Counseling Discussion is unsuccessful and Corrective Action is required. Or, if the behavior or conduct is so egregious that the constructive counseling process should be waived and immediate use of the formal corrective action process introduced.

• If the employee’s performance or conduct does not improve, or the problem is not corrected following counseling, it may be necessary to proceed to other steps in the Corrective Action Process which include the following:

B. Performance Improvement Plan (PIP) is designed to help an employee address and correct any work and/or performance issues.

✔ Advance preparation or planning to outline the problem area(s) on Performance Improvement Plan form (see appendix);
✔ Conduct a timely, private, face-to-face meeting to review expectations as stated on PIP with direct report including:

1. State the exact performance that must be improved; be specific and cite examples
2. Identify and specify the support and resources available to assist the employee to succeed
3. Communicate plan for providing feedback. Specify when and how often meetings will be held. Specify the measurements that will be considered in evaluating progress
4. Specify possible consequences if the established performance standards are not met
5. Provide sources of additional information such as the Employee Handbook that will assist in performance improvement.

✔ Meet regularly with direct report to discuss progress in accordance with above.

Note: If there is no improvement in performance the PIP should be extended and a Final Written Warning issued.

C. Final Written Warning is issued when an employee fails to react positively to other Corrective Actions. Depending upon the severity of the infraction, it is also possible that the use of the Final Written Warning is the first and final written warning (requires Human Resources input/authorization).

✔ Letter issued when no improvement in behavior/conduct has been forthcoming, or
✔ Given when conduct or behavior is so egregious that is has risen to the level of a Final Written Warning
D. **Involuntary Termination** is the dismissal from employment.

- Is final corrective action prior to termination.

- A decision to terminate employment occurs when there is no improvement in performance following a Final Written Warning or an employee’s behavior or conduct is so egregious that termination is warranted.

- Employees are terminated for just cause.

- Done at the discretion of the Human Resources Department and the Chief Executive Officer.

E. **Suspension with/without Pay**

Used at the *discretion of Human Resources only*, an employee may be suspended with or without pay for investigatory reasons.

*Note: Action(s) taken depend on the severity of the infraction.*

HR 1.14 combines Policies HR 1.7 Disruptive Behaviors and HR 1.14 Discipline

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Detailed Definitions, Forms and Examples are included in the Glossary Section of the Appendix