**Disciplinary Procedure**

This Disciplinary Procedure is not part of your Contract of Employment, save as required by law.

**PRINCIPLES**

* No disciplinary action will be taken until an investigation has taken place.
* You will be advised of the nature of the problem and will be given the opportunity to state your case before any decision is made.
* You have the right to be accompanied by a work colleague or Union rep throughout.
* You may be dismissed for a first breach of discipline in the case of gross misconduct, where the penalty may be dismissal without notice.
* You have the right to appeal against any disciplinary penalty imposed.
* The procedure may be implemented at any Stage.
* If you are accused of misconduct, you may be suspended pending action.
* After any formal disciplinary meeting we will confirm in writing:-
* the reason for the disciplinary action
* any timescale within which improvement is expected
* the stage the disciplinary procedure has reached
* that you have the right to appeal any decision.

**DISCIPLINARY STAGES**

Minor breaches of discipline will be dealt with informally but where breaches are more serious, or are repeated, the following formal procedure will be invoked:

**Stage 1 - Verbal Warning**

If your performance does not meet acceptable standards or there is a repetition of minor disciplinary offences – for example, lateness - a verbal warning may be given. This will be confirmed in writing.

**Stage 2 - Written Warning**

If the offence is a serious one, or there is a failure to improve following a verbal warning, a written warning may be given.

**Stage 3 - Final Written Warning**

If your performance does not improve, or if the offence is sufficiently serious enough to warrant only one written warning, a final written warning will be issued.

**Stage 4 – Dismissal**

If your performance does not improve after the final written warning, or if there is a return to unacceptable standards after a temporary improvement, dismissal may result.

Dismissals will be subject to the statutory period of notice or payment in lieu of notice except in cases of gross misconduct.

**Warnings**

All warnings will remain valid for 6 months.

**Gross Misconduct**

Here are some examples of gross misconduct offences. This list is not exhaustive.

* falsification of records
* deliberate disregard of safety rules or precautions
* theft
* abuse of property
* fighting
* threatened assault or intimidation
* drunkenness or abuse of drugs
* improper conduct while at work or on our business
* refusal to carry out a lawful instruction
* abusing a horse
* smoking in unauthorised areas
* dishonesty or falsifying documents

**Appeals**

You may appeal against any disciplinary penalty imposed.

Appeals must be in writing and received within 5 working days of the date of the disciplinary action.