

EMPLOYEE STANDARDS OF CONDUCT

DH
(LOCAL)

ETHICAL STANDARDS Employees are subject to the ethical standards set forth below from the *Tarrant County College District Code of Professional Ethics*.

VIOLATIONS Employees shall comply with the ethical standards and rules of conduct set out in this policy and with any other policies, regulations, and guidelines that impose duties, requirements, or standards attendant to their status as College District employees. Violation of any policies, regulations, or guidelines may result in disciplinary action, including termination of employment. Nothing in this policy modifies the at-will status of noncontractual employees. [See DDC and DM series]

CODE OF PROFESSIONAL ETHICS In order to express the affirmation of the College District's professional responsibilities more adequately, the employees of the College District, with the full support of the Board, do adopt and hold ourselves and each other subject to the following *Code of Professional Ethics*:

Place the educational welfare and success of College District students as the College District's highest priority. Strive to help each student realize his or her full potential as a scholar and as a human being.

Treat all persons with respect, dignity, and justice, not discriminating against anyone on an arbitrary basis such as race, creed, sex, age, religion, or disability.

Refrain from any conduct deemed to be sexual harassment, racial harassment, or any other form of illegal harassment. Report immediately any violation through the chain of supervision.

Encourage and defend the unfettered pursuit of truth. Support the free exchange of ideas and observe the highest standards of academic honesty, integrity, scholarship, and tolerance of other viewpoints.

Recognize the necessity of many roles in the educational enterprise and work in such a manner as to enhance teamwork and collegiality among students, faculty, administrators, and support staff.

Recognize and preserve the confidential nature of professional relationships, neither disclosing nor encouraging the disclosure of information or rumor that might damage, embarrass, or violate the privacy of any person unless required by law. This is not to indicate that persons of good judgment should not apprise College District officials of legal or ethical violations of College District policy.

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Maintain competence through continued professional development. Demonstrate competence through preparation and performance, and seek to enhance that competence by requesting and accepting constructive criticism and evaluation.

Refrain from activities that may have a conflict of interest. Exercise the highest professional standards in the use of time and resources. Refrain from using professional position for personal gain on campus or while working regularly assigned hours. Recognize the responsibility to the citizens and taxpayers of Tarrant County.

Fulfill the employment agreement both in spirit and in fact. Neither accept tasks for which we are not qualified nor assign tasks to unqualified persons.

Act in all affairs in such a manner as to bring credit to the institution. Know and support the goals, objectives, and ideals of the institution.

Observe the stated rules and regulations of the institution. Seek revision in a judicious manner.

Participate in the governance of the institution by accepting a fair share of committee and institutional responsibilities.

Support the right of due process for all.

Disapprove the continuation in higher education of an individual who is found, through due process, to be persistently unethical or professionally incompetent.

Accept all the rights and responsibilities of citizenship including participation in the formulation of public policy.

Refrain from any consensual relationship of an amorous or sexual nature between persons of authority, such as faculty or administrators, and their students or subordinates. Recognize that this behavior compromises the special trust between the College District and the citizens it serves.

RULES OF CONDUCT

Every organization must have certain rules in order to operate smoothly and efficiently, to make cooperation with other employees easier, and to assist in properly respecting the rights and interests of each employee.

In most cases, such as poor work performance, minor infraction of College District regulations, poor attendance, and the like, corrective action may be taken in an effort to enable the employee to become a more productive member of the College District. If such action is not effective, the employee may be dismissed.

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Examples of offenses that may warrant immediate discharge are as follows:

1. Refusal to carry out job duties or reasonable directives of the employee's supervisor.
2. Deliberate or reckless action that causes either actual or potential loss, damage, or physical injury to the College District, its employees, students, or students' property.
3. Fighting or disorderly conduct on College District premises.
4. Unauthorized disclosure of confidential or related material or information.
5. Misrepresentation, including falsification of reports or records.
6. Conviction under a criminal drug statute or the illegal or unauthorized sale, purchase, transfer, use, or possession of alcohol or any dangerous controlled or illicit substance as defined by Texas law, on campus or at a College District-sponsored or -sanctioned activity.
7. Misappropriation of College District funds or other assets.
8. Illegal or unauthorized sale, purchase, transfer, use, or possession of alcohol or drugs (narcotics, hallucinogens, stimulants) on College District premises or while on College District business.
9. Illegal or unauthorized possession of a weapon on College District property.
10. Being under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs on the job or on College District premises. The College District has the right to require an appropriate test if an employee is suspected of being under the influence of drugs or alcohol.
11. Failure to report absence from work.
12. Use of offensive or abusive language or conduct toward employees, students, or the public.
13. Conviction of or pleading guilty to a felony or a drug-related offense.

The offenses above serve as examples of good cause and are not intended to be all inclusive, nor do they imply forfeiture of an at-will employment right with noncontractual employees.

If a decision is made to dismiss an employee under this section, dismissal procedures [see DM series] shall be followed.

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Any employee who is found guilty (including a plea of no contest) or has a sentence, fine, or other penalty including deferred adjudication) imposed by a court of competent jurisdiction under criminal statute for an offense involving abuse, injury, or misconduct of children or an offense involving a controlled substance that occurred in or on premises or property owned or controlled by the College District shall report such action to the vice chancellor for administration and general counsel within five days of the conviction.

ELECTRONIC MEDIA

Electronic media includes all forms of social media, such as text messaging, instant messaging, electronic mail (e-mail), Web logs (blogs), electronic forums (chat rooms), video-sharing Web sites, editorial comments posted on the Internet, and social network sites. Electronic media also includes all forms of telecommunication, such as landlines, cell phones, and Web-based applications.

RECORD
RETENTION

An employee shall comply with the College District's requirements for records retention and destruction to the extent those requirements apply to electronic media. [See CIA]

PERSONAL USE

Employees shall be held to the same professional standards in their public use of electronic media as they are for any other public conduct. If an employee's use of electronic media violates state or federal law or College District policy, or interferes with the employee's ability to effectively perform his or her job duties, the employee is subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment.

TOBACCO USE

The use of tobacco products shall be prohibited on College District grounds and in College District buildings, facilities, and vehicles. This prohibition shall also apply to spaces leased by the College District. The use of tobacco products shall be permitted in private vehicles parked on College District property provided any residue is retained within the vehicles. Violation of the College District's policy on tobacco use may result in disciplinary action up to and including termination.