

Springdale Fire Department

Policy & Procedures Manual

Volume 1 – Administration

Section 102 – Personnel Policy

102.3 – Coaching, Counseling, and Discipline

Officers shall treat personnel in a fair and impartial manner at all times. Prejudice for any reason is unacceptable. Officers are responsible to monitor their subordinate personnel and ensure that personnel conduct themselves in accordance with all applicable laws, policies, procedures, rules, orders, and directives as established by the federal government, state government, civil service commission, City of Springdale, and the Springdale Fire Department, and to take the necessary measures to enforce policies, procedures, rules, orders, and directives. Officers shall supervise the work of subordinates to ensure efficiency and that proper policies and procedures are followed.

Whenever Officers recognize misconduct, incompetence, or substandard performance of subordinate personnel, they are responsible to take appropriate action to correct the misconduct, incompetence, or substandard performance. There are three levels of corrective action categorized as Corrective Coaching, Special Counseling, and Disciplinary Action.

Officers are responsible to identify and implement corrective action appropriate to the individual case and degree of misconduct, incompetence, or substandard performance of the subordinate. In order to provide a high level of consistency, Officers (Fire Chief excepted) who are considering formal disciplinary action as a corrective measure shall seek guidance and approval from their immediate supervisor prior to final determination and delivery of formal disciplinary action to a subordinate.

Misconduct, incompetence, or substandard performance that inhibits good order and efficiency, or creates a detrimental or other undesirable situation that is minor in nature may be best addressed through Corrective Coaching given from the Officer to the employee. Corrective Coaching involves direct instruction, direction, demonstration, practice, etc. and/or verbal directions/orders to correct the situation. Corrective Coaching shall not be considered formal discipline and is non-punitive. Corrective Coaching is intended to be a training tool used to educate the employee and assist in improving the employee's knowledge, skill base, or behavior. Actions by the employee that require the use of numerous Corrective Coaching sessions may lead to the use of Special Counseling.

Misconduct, incompetence, or substandard performance that is more serious in nature than can be responsibly addressed through Corrective Coaching, but yet is less serious than should be addressed through Formal Disciplinary Action, may be best addressed in the non-punitive action of Special Counseling. A standard "Notice of Special Counseling Form" is to be used to document the counseling and is available in the SFD Forms Folder. This form must properly document the circumstances of misconduct, incompetence, or substandard performance and will be forwarded to the employee's Shift Commander after completion. The Shift Commander will review and sign the form and then forward it to the Fire Chief for review. If the Fire Chief concurs the usage of Special Counseling is appropriate, the form will be returned to the Shift Commander who will retain the form in a secure file for a period of one year.

If during the one year period, there are no additional Notices of Special Counseling given to the employee, then the form will expire and be permanently removed from the file in the Shift

Commander's Office. If at anytime during the one year period the employee receives any additional Notice(s) of Special Counseling, then the one year period of expiration will begin on the date when the last Notice of Special Counseling was written, and all previous, pertinent documents contained in the Shift Commander's file will remain in effect until one year from the date of the last Notice of Special Counseling delivery.

The Shift Commander will provide a copy of all active Notices of Special Counseling Forms to the appropriate Company Officer(s) during the yearly evaluation period for the Company Officer to refer to while generating the employee's yearly evaluation.

If there are multiple instances of Special Counseling, either for reoccurring misconduct, incompetence, or substandard performance, or other pertinent instances of misconduct or incompetence, then The Notice of Special Counseling Form(s) in an employee's file will be referenced when taking Formal and/or Punitive Disciplinary Action.

Misconduct, incompetence, or substandard performance of more serious nature, and/or is a repeated offense of a less serious nature, which cannot be appropriately addressed through special counseling shall be addressed through Formal Disciplinary Action. Examples of misconduct and incompetence for which disciplinary action may be taken are found in the Rules and Regulations of the Springdale Civil Service Commission manual Chapter 8, Section 1. The five distinct levels of disciplinary action which may be taken are detailed in the Rules and Regulations of the Springdale Civil Service Commission manual Chapter 8, Section 2.

Company Officers and Battalion Chiefs are authorized to administer Formal Disciplinary Action at the level of Oral Reprimand and Written Reprimand. All Oral Reprimands shall be reduced to writing. A sample format to be used as documentation for an Oral Reprimand as well as a sample format to be used for a Written Reprimand is available in the SFD Forms Folder. These forms shall be typed out in a Word document and must properly document the circumstance(s) and specifics of the misconduct, incompetence, or substandard performance and clearly identify the type of disciplinary action taken.

Officers shall immediately forward written copies of all disciplinary actions (via the proper Chain of Command) to the Fire Chief for inclusion in the employee's personnel file in accordance with the Rules and Regulations of the Springdale Civil Service Commission.