



# Carroll County Department of Fire & EMS Standard Operating Procedure

## DOCUMENT DETAILS

<b>Standard Operating Procedure: 2.03</b>	<b>Effective Date: December 1, 2022</b>
<b>Subject: Disciplinary Policy</b>	<b>Section: Human Resources</b>
<b>Authorized: Chief Michael Robinson</b>	<b>Revision Date: February 1, 2026 <i>PJS</i></b>

**Applicability:**      ☐ Volunteer      ☒ Career

## I. PURPOSE

The policy outlines the procedures, criteria, and guidelines for assessing, evaluating and administering discipline to employees.

## II. DEFINITIONS

**Supervisor:** An employee who holds the rank of lieutenant or higher to manage the performance or other employees, and who exercises independent judgment, making recommendations in such areas as hiring, performance reviews, promotion, discipline, and discharge.

**Personnel File:** Will be comprised of information maintained, in written or electronic form, by HR and DFEMS.

## III. PROCEDURES

### A. REASONS FOR DISCIPLINARY ACTIONS

1. Listed below are some of the reasons which may be causes for disciplinary action, but disciplinary action is not limited to the offenses listed below:
  - a. Failure to perform assigned duties properly
  - b. Insubordination (disobedience or refusal to perform assignments/duties)
  - c. Chronic or habitual absenteeism or lateness
  - d. Abuse of sick leave
  - e. Being absent without approved leave
  - f. Unauthorized use of, removal of, theft, or intentional damage to the property of the County or another employee, independent contractor, or customer
  - g. Giving false statements to any County official or employee, or the public

- h. Violation of County Ordinances, administrative regulations or division/department/agency rules, policies, or procedures
- i. Use, sale, or possession of illegal drugs, marijuana (including medical marijuana) and/or alcohol on the job, on County property, or in County vehicles
- j. Failure to report a criminal charge, orders of protection, arrestable traffic charges, or other arrests
- k. Conviction of violation of any law bearing on job performance
- l. Accepting an inducement to perform or fail to perform
- m. Refusal to be examined by a County appointed medical professional when so directed
- n. Conduct which is unbecoming
- o. Violation of a posted safety, fire prevention, health, or security rule
- p. Falsification of records (e.g. hours worked, documentation, licenses or certifications, etc.)
- q. A false statement in an employee's application for employment
- r. Under the influence of an illegal drug, a controlled dangerous substance, or alcohol while on the job or the use of a tobacco product under the tobacco abstinence policy.
- s. Dishonesty or theft
- t. Endangering the safety of or causing injury to other personnel or the public
- u. Unsatisfactory performance evaluation
- v. Violations of COMAR Title 30
- w. Violation of civil rights as defined under Title VII of the United States Code (USC).

## B. PROCEDURES

### 1. Disciplinary Action

- a. The provisions formulated in this Rule are within the scope of the Director/Chief's authority to make such Rules and Regulations as may be deemed necessary for the efficient operation and governance of DFEMS.
- b. Discipline shall be imposed by the DFEMS in accordance with the provisions of this rule and shall be progressive in nature; that is, generally beginning at a low level and progressing to higher levels, as necessary. Progressive Disciplinary Action is a tiered concept. The purpose of counseling employees is to correct behavior and ensure future compliance with the Rules and Regulations, Standard Operation Procedures and Departmental policies.
- c. Neither the concept of progressive discipline nor the availability of formal proceedings shall be considered to replace or modify the provisions of the Carroll County Code (ref. Ch. 37) for suspension of Department employees.
- d. Any supervisor issuing disciplinary action to an employee must first consult with their immediate supervisor. This will allow for a review of the employees

past disciplinary action and to ensure consistency and the issuance of progressive disciplinary steps.

2. Progressive Discipline.

- a. In most cases, but not all, supervisors shall impose a progression of disciplinary actions before recommending dismissal.
- b. The county reserves the right to judge each case individually, based on such factors as the seriousness of infraction, the employee's performance record and length of county service, and any other relevant consideration.
- c. Progressive discipline may include the following based on an investigative process and a determination of the severity/impact of the disciplinary offense. There shall be no requirement for progressive discipline to occur at the lowest level, rather it shall be applied based on the significance of the disciplinary infraction.
  - i. Verbal reprimand
  - ii. Written reprimand
  - iii. Suspension (with or without pay)
  - iv. Demotion of rank
  - v. Termination
- d. Suspensions, demotions and terminations are at the discretion of DFEMS management and HR.
- e. Disciplinary action may be appealed through the grievance procedure as set forth by Chapter 37.

#### **IV. RECISION**

This Standard Operating Procedure rescinds all directives regarding Disciplinary Policy or similar content previously issued for personnel of the Carroll County Department of Fire & EMS.

#### **V. RELATED STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURES / DOCUMENTS**

#### **VI. ATTACHMENTS**