

## Guidelines & Templates for Performance Management Documentation

### Sample documentation:

Written Summary of a Verbal Disciplinary Discussion  
Written Warning  
Termination Letters  
Administrative Leave Letter  
Performance Improvement Plan (PIP)

Progressive discipline is an opportunity to educate the employee and to promote successful performance. The goal of any disciplinary action is to improve performance and/or behavior. Policies related to performance management can be found at <http://policies.emory.edu/> under Employee Relations.

### Elements of a Written Summary of a Verbal Disciplinary Discussion

1. State that the memo is to confirm the verbal discussion and is not a written warning.
2. State the date, time and place when the meeting(s) took place.
3. Summarize the unacceptable performance and/or conduct and how it affects the workplace, as well as the employee's responses during the meeting.
4. Identify the expectation(s) communicated to the employee and the way(s) to resolve the problem(s) as agreed upon during the meeting.
5. Note any arrangement made for follow-up, including specific dates or time-frames.
6. Include signature and date lines for employee to sign, acknowledging that the memo is an accurate summary of the meeting.

### Sample: Documenting a Verbal Warning

Memo:  
Date  
Employee name & office address

Dear XXX,

This letter serves as a summary of our meeting on date/time/place, regarding your performance/conduct. This is only a reiteration of what we discussed; it is not a written warning. During our meeting I described to you the areas of your performance that need improvement. They include,

(sample items):

- Tardiness and excessive absences Punctuality and regular attendance are important to productivity and establishing a good work record. When others must cover for your absences, the overall workload is increased and performance and service are compromised. Once again on date, you reported to work at 7:20 a.m., twenty (20) minutes after the start of your regularly scheduled shift. Your tardiness caused a delayed start for your work team which affected the coordination and completion of the team's duties for the remainder of the morning. You explained that you did not call in because you overslept. This has become a pattern and you are not notifying me until you arrive at the workplace. Last minute delays are communicated according the established departmental procedure of xxxxxxxxxx. Unexpected absences are communicated to your supervisor xxxxxxxxxxxxx. If you cannot reach your supervisor, xxxxxxxxxxxxx. To schedule a planned absence, follow the department's protocol of xxxxxxxxxx. This allows your supervisor to make adjustments to schedules so that your duties can be covered while you are gone.
- Performance On date you were asked to balance the xxxxxx budget for which you have access to the xxxxxx database in order to perform this duty. You were also instructed to have that work reviewed by name. As of date, this was not completed, nor was it reviewed by name. It was crucial that this task be completed by the deadline of date. When you do not balance the budget on time, we are unable to produce the summary report for xxxxxx and in turn, s/he cannot provide financial analysis in time to create future proposals. In our meeting we agreed that you will complete this task on schedule. If you anticipate missing this deadline, you will notify me at least four (4) days in advance.
- Communication Written and verbal communication should always be professional and appropriate in both language and tone. When your coworkers receive emails or hear you use language such as, "This is a total waste of my time," "I don't see why I should care about this," or "You don't need to micro-manage me; I'll get back to you when I can," you set a tone that is disrespectful and not conducive to a professional and productive team environment. We agreed that in future communications you will be careful to maintain a cooperative and positive attitude at all times. When you disagree with something, you will convey that politely in a manner that indicates that you are willing to seek resolution.
- Policy violation On dates you violated Policy 4.62, Standards of Conduct, specifically, inappropriate use of an Emory copy machine. Although this was a misunderstanding on your part, you assured me that you now fully understand this policy and will consult with your supervisor whenever you have questions about equipment use.

As we discussed, you need to show improvement in this/these area(s). (if appropriate): I will schedule weekly meetings during which we will review your progress and identify next steps, if necessary.

Name, this department relies on you to be a contributing member of the staff. As always, I hope you will feel free to discuss with me any problems or concerns that may arise.

Sincerely,

By my signature below, I hereby acknowledge that I received a copy of this notice of discipline. My signature does not necessarily indicate agreement with the contents.

---

Employee Name

---

Date

cc.:    xxxxxxx  
      xxxxxxx

### Elements of a Written Warning

1. State the problem.
2. Refer to previous discussion(s) with the employee and/or the action(s) taken to date.
3. State the specific directives for correcting the unacceptable performance and/or conduct.
4. Indicate that the notice represents formal discipline, is a *first/final/other* warning, and spell out the nature of the disciplinary action to be taken immediately.
5. Inform the employee of the consequences for lack of improvement, and/or that continued failure to meet expectations will result in further discipline, up to and including termination.
6. Signature and date lines for employee to sign.

Note:

State the facts of the situation without references to a protected class, inferences, assumptions, or legal or medical opinions such as,

“You seem to have a really bad attitude.”

“You fraudulently obtained....”

“I think you may be depressed.”

### Sample: Written Warning

Department Header

Date

Employee name & office address

Mr/Ms XXX,

You are being given this written warning to reinforce the importance of carrying out your assigned duties properly and/or following all Emory University and departmental policies, practices and procedures.

(sample items):

- (tardiness) Emory University Human Resources Policies, 4.62, provides that employees may be disciplined for  
“Failure to follow Emory’s policies or procedures”  
In this department, that means that you are to be at your workstation promptly at 8:00 a.m., ready to perform your assigned duties, greet visitors, and answer the phone. I have discussed this matter with you several times, most recently on, date, date and date. It is critical that you improve your punctuality.
- (failure to perform) Emory University Human Resources Policy, 4.62, Standards of Conduct, provides that employees may be disciplined for,  
“Neglect of duty or failure or refusal to perform job-related duties and assignments.”  
This means that you are expected to perform all work assignments at a satisfactory level. On date and date you were asked to reconcile the xxxx account which is a fundamental duty within your job description. This task was completed 3 and 6 days late, respectively, and contained several errors. It is extremely important that this task be performed accurately and on schedule.
- (communication/behavior) Emory University Human Resources Policy 4.62, Standards of Conduct, prohibits,  
“Inappropriate, disruptive, discourteous or irregular behavior adversely affecting students, employees, patients, or visitors”  
On date in a public area of the building in the presence of students and customers you argued loudly with your supervisor, using crude language and exhibiting discourteous behavior. You then left the area, slamming the door behind you. I have discussed similar behavior with you several times before, most recently on date when you received a verbal warning and you were advised how to address disagreements you may have with your supervisor. Such behavior must stop immediately.
- (policy violation) Emory University Human Resources Policy, 4.62, Standards of Conduct, provides discipline for failure to follow policies and procedure,  
“An employee on jury duty is expected to report to work, where reasonable conditions exist, for all or part of the scheduled workday(s) that he/she is not engaged in jury service.”  
On date, you did not contact your supervisor after you were dismissed from jury duty at 9:30 a.m., well within the workday period when you could have returned to work. You are expected to observe all attendance-related policies and procedures.

During your new employee orientation, you were informed that you are responsible for complying with the policies set forth in the Human Resources Policies. At that time you received a copy of the departmental work rules. The department name's expectations

for this position remain unchanged from our previous discussions. Continued failure to meet and maintain these expectations will result in further disciplinary action up to, and including, termination.

Employee's first name, I am confident that you are capable of this and I look forward to your improved performance and contributions to this department.

Sincerely,

Supervisor

By my signature below, I hereby acknowledge that I received a copy of this notice of discipline. My signature does not necessarily indicate agreement with the contents.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Employee Name

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

cc.:    xxxxxxx  
      xxxxxxx

### Elements of a Termination Letter

1. Inform the employee s/he is being terminated, effective when and why.
2. Specify when s/he received warning(s) for that/those failure(s)/violation(s).
3. Conclude with,  
    Your final check will include payment for any unused hours of vacation leave up to a maximum of 240 hours that you have accrued. You may contact (name), Benefits Specialist, name, at (phone number) to discuss your benefits options.

*When applicable and employee is leaving the workplace immediately or receiving the termination letter at home:*

You may contact me at phone number to arrange a time to return your keys/equipment/etc. and collect any personal items left in your workplace.

*Optional for cases of inability:*

Employee name, this has not been an easy decision and I sincerely wish you success in finding another position that will be a better match for your skills.

4. Signature and date lines for the employee to sign.

## Sample: Termination Letter

Department Header

Date

Employee name & home/office address

Mr/Ms Xxx,

- (attendance) Your employment with Emory University is terminated effective date, due to your repeated tardiness and absences. This was discussed with you repeatedly over the last six months and most recently you received a written warning on date. In that warning I reminded you of our policies and departmental rules regarding attendance.
- (performance) Your employment with Emory University is terminated effective date, due to repeated failure to perform. When you were hired into your current position, you were provided the Job Description. During your orientation, the duties you would be expected to perform were explained to you. Since then you have been provided periodic training as well as additional instruction at your request. However, there have been continued deficiencies in your performance and failure to follow directives. This was discussed with you numerous times and the Performance Improvement Plan provided to you on date has not resulted in improvement. (*for inability, see example below*)
- (communication/behavior) Your employment with Emory University is terminated effective date, due to your inappropriate behavior and communication. As was discussed with you numerous times in meetings and a written warning on date, loud, disrespectful and crude language in the workplace, particularly in public spaces in front of students and customers, is unacceptable. You were warned that another such incident could result in termination yet, you exhibited this behavior again today in the department entryway.
- (policy violation) Your employment with Emory University is terminated effective date, due to repeated failure to notify your supervisor adequately in advance of a planned absence. I have reviewed with you the leave request procedure for this department several times and provided you a written warning on date. However, on date you told your supervisor that you would not be at work the next day due to an appointment, providing less than 24 hours notice. You were told that you could not be absent because schedules could not be adjusted at such late notice. However, you failed to report to work the next day. This is a violation of both the Vacation Leave Policy, 4.100 and the Standards of Conduct Policy, 4.62 and you are not eligible for rehire.

Your final check will include payment for any unused hours of vacation leave to a maximum of 240 hours that you have accrued. You may contact (name), Benefits Specialist, name, at (phone number) to discuss your benefits options.

Sincerely,

Supervisor

By my signature below, I hereby acknowledge that I received a copy of this notice of discipline. My signature does not necessarily indicate agreement with the contents.

---

Employee Name

---

Date

cc.:     xxxxxxx  
          xxxxxxx

### **Sample: Termination Letter - Inability**

Department Header

Date

Employee name & office address

Mr/Ms XXX,

After careful consideration, I have decided to terminate your employment with Emory University, effective date. This has been a difficult decision but a necessary one in the interests of this department's effective operations.

You and I have had many meetings to discuss your performance shortcomings and despite your sincere efforts, your Performance Reviews have not improved. As my most recent Written Warning on date indicated, failure to meet the expectations of the position could result in dismissal. We have made every effort to help you improve and learn the duties of your position but feel that it is simply not a good match for your abilities. Emory University Human Resources Policy, 4.65, Separations from Employment, provides a no-fault separation for these reasons,

- The employee lacks the necessary skills and abilities to perform the job
- The employee is not able to perform the essential functions of the job on a regular basis and reasonable further accommodations cannot be made

You will be eligible to apply for other positions at Emory for which you might qualify. You may contact Cathy Patton, Recruiting Manager, at 404-727-7191, to assist you in that process. I will be happy to serve as a reference for you.

Optional: You may request a personal leave of absence in 30-day increments up to a total of 90 days while you look for another position at Emory. All requests for continued personal leave should be in writing on a leave of absence request form two weeks prior to the beginning of the leave period. You may use your accrued vacation leave to be paid while on personal leave of absence until it is exhausted. After your accrued leave is exhausted, provided you continue regular

employee contributions, the personal leave status will allow you to maintain eligibility in Emory's health care plan at the active employee rate.

As of today's date, our records indicate you have \_\_\_\_\_ vacation hours. Upon termination, you will be paid for any accrued vacation, up to a maximum of 240 hours. Should you transfer to another position within Emory University, accrued vacation, sick leave, and floating holiday leave would transfer. Contact name, Benefits Specialist, Human Resources, phone number, to discuss your benefits options.

Name, this has been a difficult decision and I sincerely wish you success in finding another position that will be a better match for you.

Sincerely,

By my signature below, I hereby acknowledge that I received a copy of this notice of discipline. My signature does not necessarily indicate agreement with the contents.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Employee Name

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

cc.:   xxxxxxx  
      xxxxxxx

### **Sample: Administrative Leave Letter**

*(departments must consult with Organizational Development & Employee Relations prior to placing an employee on Administrative Leave, see HR Policy 4.72)*

Department Header

Date

Employee name & address

Mr/Ms Xxx,

You are being/have been placed on unpaid Administrative Leave effective date, while

*a confidential matter is investigated*  
*an investigation is conducted by the Office of Equal Opportunity Program*  
*an investigation is conducted into the incident in my office/in the hallway/etc.*  
*earlier today/on date/etc.*

It is anticipated that the investigation will be concluded within #days. You will be notified by telephone as soon as we have more information about your employment status with Emory University.

Please make sure we have your current address and the telephone number(s) we should use while you are on Administrative Leave of Absence.

*Optional:* While you are on administrative leave, you are not to come to worksite/ and other specified areas until your scheduled return to work.

If the investigation indicates that disciplinary action is warranted, we reserve the right to take further corrective action, up to and including termination, during the administrative leave. If you have further questions, you may contact me at telephone# or name, Divisional Director, OD/ER Human Resources, at telephone#.

Sincerely,

Cc: xxxxxxxxx  
xxxxxxx

## Sample: Performance Improvement Plan

Date  
Employee name  
Supervisor name  
Dates of PIP

Although name has demonstrated some of the skills and abilities required to perform the duties of position title, s/he does not meet department performance expectations consistently. S/he has not demonstrated the knowledge/ job awareness/commitment at the level this position requires. Immediate and sustained improvement is needed.

The following Performance Improvement Plan is designed to clarify performance expectations. It is a supplement to, not a replacement for, the position title job description, which is attached at the end of this document. Name is expected to implement immediately the performance expectations that are listed below. *(optional: attach department procedures and protocols if appropriate)*

To facilitate sustained improvement, name's performance will be evaluated in writing on a monthly/biweekly/other basis for the next ##(90) days, with an overall assessment on date. This plan may be modified as necessary during this period, depending on name's progress.

(samples of areas needing improvement)

**Time Management and Organization** Improved organization and minimization of distractions will help you complete tasks accurately and in a timely fashion.

**Limit personal, non-emergency phone calls, emails and internet use to your break and lunch times.**

**Develop a system for organizing, tracking and completing tasks and requests.**

Create a notebook or calendar that will enable you to keep track of all assignments and requests. Before deleting emails that contain important information regarding assignments, make sure this information is transferred into your organization system. Follow through on all requests to completion. If the completion of a task requires you to request information from a 3<sup>rd</sup> party, document your requests and follow up on a regular basis until you receive the needed response. Make use of checklists for multi-step procedures and complex projects.

**Create an agenda for the weekly meeting with your supervisor** Review your calendar or notebook as well as the agenda from the previous week's meeting. Make a list of projects and requests completed during the previous week. Make a prioritized list of ongoing, unfinished projects and requests and be prepared to explain what you have done and when you expect to complete the task. Make a list of upcoming deadlines, anticipated projects and ideas for improving processes and procedures.

**Productivity and efficiency** If you do not have specific projects/requests to work on, or while waiting for others to respond to your questions, review your notebook or calendar. Make sure all of your responsibilities are up to date. Solicit new assignments from XXXX.

**Work independently** Note that working independently does not mean asking no questions – it means that you are completing required tasks and assignments without needing to be reminded. Use the resources provided during your training and others available to you such as procedures, protocols and safety documents, websites, instructional memos, etc.

### **Attention to Detail**

**Listen to and/or read all instructions carefully, more than once if necessary.** If you have questions, find the answers before proceeding. Consult written instructions and protocols often, particularly when working with sensitive materials or beginning projects that will use considerable time and resources.

**Check and double-check** numbers and data, spelling and grammar, and procedural steps before submitting documents, reports, presentations, relaying information, etc.

### **Customer Service**

**Greet every person who walks through the door and offer to provide assistance.** Look up, make eye contact, offer a personable welcome, and ask if you can help. Speak loudly enough to be easily heard and enunciate clearly. If you are on the telephone and a person enters the office, acknowledge her/him with eye contact and a head nod and indicate that you will be right with her/him. You are the frontline face of the office - often the first contact faculty, staff, students and guests from outside the University have with our department.

**Maintain a courteous, positive attitude toward faculty, staff and students at all times.** Listen attentively. Do not interrupt. Enunciate clearly and speak loudly enough to be easily heard. Do not assume a person has understood what you say, but look for a response back. If you do not get a response, politely solicit one such as, “Was that clear?” If someone in the office needs assistance with the photocopier or the fax machine, stop what you are doing, stand up and offer to help.

**Respond to all faculty requests for basic office support immediately.** Basic office support includes, but is not limited to, photocopying, mailing and shipping, faxing, finding office supplies, problems with main office equipment (photocopier, fax machine, printers, and shredder), computer support, and requests related to classrooms and classroom equipment. Respond affirmatively to requests. Indicate that you have understood the request, or ask for details to clarify the scope and urgency of the request. Give a clear indication of when you expect to complete the request. If you are in the middle of a project when another faculty member makes a request, carefully record the request and tell the faculty member that you will address it at your earliest possible convenience. If you are faced with competing priorities of faculty members, discuss the situation with your supervisor.

**Maintain a functioning front office.** Attached, you will find a checklist of tasks for office operations. Follow it carefully.

Turn on the photocopier when you arrive each morning.

Fill photocopier, fax machine, and networked printers with paper before you leave at the end of each day. Keep several extra reams of paper under the counter at all times. Keep replacement toner/printer cartridges for front office machines on hand at all times.

Twice a day, remove print outs from the fax machine, as well as papers left on the printers and the counter, and place them in the appropriate faculty mailbox. If you cannot identify the papers, place them in the basket on the counter.

Review the contents of the basket at the end of each week; recycle any papers that cannot be identified.

Empty the shredder once a week.

Sort and distribute the mail as soon as it arrives. If a parcel arrives that does not fit in an individual mailbox, place it in the respective faculty office. If a mailbox is full, remove the contents and place them in the respective faculty office.

### **Teamwork**

Show respect and consideration for your colleagues at all times. Use polite language and tone. Offer assistance. If asked to assist and you cannot at that moment, apologize and tell the person that you will come as soon as possible. Refrain from criticizing other staff members in a derogatory way. If s/he is doing something wrong, find a positive way to call it to her/his attention such as, "That happened to me once. I found that if I did xxxxxx, it worked really well." Or, "I may be confused, but my numbers came out this way xxxxxx. Are we using the same formulas?" Or, "Can we discuss changing this process? Right now, when anyone is out of the office, the handoff of that report is delayed and I don't have time to complete it by the deadline. What could we do to avoid this?"

I have read this Performance Improvement Plan, discussed it with my supervisor, and understand the performance expectations it includes.

\_\_\_\_\_

Employee

\_\_\_\_\_

Date

\_\_\_\_\_

Supervisor

\_\_\_\_\_

Date