



Office of the Mayor
City of Columbus
Ohio

CENTRAL WORK RULES

The administration of the City of Columbus establishes the following Central Work Rules, which apply to all employees of the City of Columbus to ensure:

- That its employees conduct themselves in a mature, responsible, and professional manner during work hours or while on City premises;
- That employees work in an efficient, conscientious, and diligent manner;
- That all employees work in a safe environment, without risk to their health or safety, or the health and safety of others;
- That the rights of all employees are protected and honored.

These rules serve as notice to all employees as to what conduct is and is not acceptable in the workplace. In addition to following these rules, employees will also be required to follow the Rules of the Columbus Civil Service Commission, if relevant to their circumstances, as well as any policies and procedures established Citywide or in an employee's respective department or division.

Pursuant to the Columbus Civil Service Rules and any applicable collective bargaining agreement provisions, any employee who violates any of these rules may be subject to disciplinary action, including reprimand, suspension, demotion or termination from City employment, depending on the seriousness of the rules violation, the employee's disciplinary history, and any other relevant factors. The City will follow a policy of progressive disciplinary action by imposing increasingly severe disciplinary action on those employees who repeatedly violate these rules. The City reserves the right to forgo progressive disciplinary action and impose more severe disciplinary action, up to and including termination, to fit the severity of the rule infraction.

If an employee is terminated for a violation of any work rule listed herein, it will be considered a voluntary abandonment of employment for the Ohio Bureau of Workers' Compensation purposes and such abandonment shall terminate the employee's right to temporary total compensation under workers' compensation.

RULE 1. DISHONESTY. All employees are expected to be honest at all times in performing all aspects of their jobs for the City of Columbus. Employees shall not lie, deceive, steal, cheat or

defraud any City employee or member of the public in any manner. *The following acts or omissions demonstrate conduct that is prohibited by this rule. This list of conduct is not exhaustive and does not encompass the totality of behavior prohibited by this rule.*

- (A) Making false statements on applications for City employment or related documents, including but not limited to professional credentials or certifications, references, previous work experience, and criminal records.
- (B) Falsifying or tampering with personnel records, operating records, or other work records and reports, including the unauthorized use or alteration of time cards or other records kept for pay purposes.
- (C) Working more than the employee's scheduled hours (for overtime-eligible employees) without the express permission of an appropriate supervisor.
- (D) For overtime exempt employees, flexing their working hours or shift or working during a time other than the employee's scheduled hours without the express permission of an appropriate supervisor.
- (E) Stealing or misappropriating the property of the City of Columbus, including but not limited to physical/tangible property, intellectual property, copyrighted data and documents, and trade secrets.
- (F) Using or attempting to use employment with the City or knowledge acquired while working for the City for personal gain or advantage, in a manner which would violate the ethics policy of the City of Columbus or the laws of the State of Ohio pertaining to public employees and ethics.
- (G) Performing work for another employer/organization or work related to a private business conducted by an employee during an employee's normal working hours; or when marked off regular work due to personal illness or injury; or to the extent it is inconsistent with an employee's leave restrictions.
- (H) Making false or untrue statements regarding work-related matters to management, fellow employees, or a member of the public.
- (I) Engaging in any other behavior not specifically listed herein with the intent to lie, steal, cheat, defraud, or otherwise deceive any City employee or a member of the public.

RULE 2. ABUSIVE OR VIOLENT BEHAVIOR. All employees should at all times conduct themselves in a polite and civil manner toward other City employees and any member of the public with whom they may come in contact in the performance of their duties. Employees shall not abuse any City employee or a member of the public under any circumstances. Employees threatened with verbal or physical abuse or violence should report it pursuant to the Policy Regarding Workplace Violence or to law enforcement authorities if necessary, rather than responding to the behavior in a similar manner. *The following acts or omissions demonstrate conduct that is prohibited by this rule. This list of conduct is not exhaustive and does not encompass the totality of behavior prohibited by this rule.*

- (A) Threatening, intimidating, coercing, abusing, or menacing of a City employee or a member of the public, when such behavior is connected with or arises out of City employment or any other situation where there is a nexus to the employee's City employment.
- (B) Discriminating, harassing, or insulting any City employee or member of the public because of their race, color, sex, age, religion, national origin, disability, gender identity or expression, genetic information, military status, or sexual orientation.
- (C) Fighting on City premises or assigned job site, whether the fighting occurs during, before, or after working hours.
- (D) Striking a City employee or a member of the public.
- (E) Possessing or using any unauthorized dangerous instrument, weapon, or explosive (or reasonable facsimile thereof), while in the employ of the City and/or in City vehicles at any time.
- (F) Retaliating against any employee who brings a complaint or who helps in investigating such complaints, or who provides testimony for any proceeding resulting from the complaint.
- (G) Filing frivolous complaint(s) against another employee to purposely harass, menace, intimidate, or retaliate against another employee.
- (H) Engaging in any other uncivil, discourteous, abusive, or threatening conduct not specifically listed herein.

RULE 3. SUBSTANCE ABUSE. All employees are expected to report to work unimpaired by drugs or alcohol as detailed in the policies of the City of Columbus. All employees in City service shall be subject to drug and alcohol testing as set forth in collective bargaining agreements and/or City policies. *The following acts or omissions demonstrate conduct that is prohibited by this rule. This list of conduct is not exhaustive and does not encompass the totality of behavior prohibited by this rule.*

- (A) Having possession, custody, control of, or consuming any alcoholic beverage, medical marijuana, illegal drug, inhalants, or any other drug paraphernalia on City premises, in City vehicles, during working hours, or any other situation where there is a nexus to the employee's City employment. (The terms 'illegal drugs' and 'drug paraphernalia' shall include those substances and items for which the possession, custody, consumption, or control are prohibited by applicable local, state, and/or federal laws.)
- (B) Reporting for work while under the influence of alcohol or any illegal drugs, including medical marijuana or inhalants; reporting for work while suffering from an illegal drug and/or alcohol-induced hangover; or in any otherwise unsafe condition.
- (C) Failing or refusing to comply with the federal regulations and the City's policy and procedure regarding drug and alcohol testing of all employees holding commercial driver's licenses and using such licenses to perform safety-sensitive functions for the City.
- (D) Failing or refusing to comply with drug and alcohol testing mandated by a collective bargaining agreement and/or any City policy or procedure implementing the contract.

- (E) Failing or refusing to disclose use of prescription or over-the-counter drugs to supervisors, managers, and/or human resources representative, if use of such drugs may impair use of faculties or work performance.
- (F) Engaging in any other conduct related to substance abuse related to City employment not specifically listed herein.

RULE 4. MISUSE, ABUSE OR DESTRUCTION OF PROPERTY. All employees shall treat the property of the City of Columbus, including buildings, furnishings, vehicles, equipment, electronics (e.g., systems, networks, computers, laptops, tablets, phones), tools, and any other items with care and respect. Employees shall not abuse, misuse, fail to control or maintain, lose, damage or destroy City property, or the property of co-workers and/or members of the public. *The following acts or omissions demonstrate conduct that is prohibited by this rule. This list of conduct is not exhaustive and does not encompass the totality of behavior prohibited by this rule.*

- (A) Using without authorization, sabotaging, abusing, or deliberately misusing, damaging, or destroying City property, including but not limited to, motor vehicles; tools; computer hardware, software, and data; equipment, uniforms, or any other City property not specifically listed herein, as well as the property of other City employees or members of the public.
- (B) Misusing, removing, or destroying any forms, blueprints, employee lists, City records or confidential information of any nature, including computer programs and records, without proper authorization.
- (C) Unauthorized posting, removal, or defacing of notices, signs, or writing on City property.
- (D) Loading unauthorized software on City computers or connecting unauthorized hardware to City computers or network.
- (E) Abusing, misusing, or destroying City property in any other way not specifically described herein.

RULE 5. ATTENDANCE. All employees shall report to work on time. Employees shall record their attendance in the manner prescribed by their collective bargaining agreement or applicable policy. Employees unable to report for work on time shall report off to the appropriate personnel according to collective bargaining agreement or applicable policy. Employees shall monitor their sick leave and vacation leave balances and are solely responsible for ensuring they have sufficient leave to cover their absences or requests for future leave. *The following acts or omissions demonstrate conduct that is prohibited by this rule. This list of conduct is not exhaustive and does not encompass the totality of behavior prohibited by this rule.*

- (A) Failing to call off according to collective bargaining agreement and/or policy.
- (B) Having insufficient leave to cover an absence, or not having an acceptable reason for the absence, even if the employee calls off properly.

- (C) Being absent from work because of incarceration.
- (D) Being absent without leave (AWOL) for five (5) consecutive working days from duty, which will be considered sufficient grounds for termination of City employment.
- (E) Being absent without leave (AWOL) according to collective bargaining agreement and/or policy.
- (F) Abusing sick leave, disability leave, injury leave, FMLA, or unpaid leave, including falsification of a leave request or supporting medical documentation.
- (G) Reporting late or tardy for work.
- (H) Leaving assigned work area during working hours without approval.
- (I) Failing to ask for and/or receive approval for leave.
- (J) Violating any departmental or divisional attendance policies.

RULE 6. INSUBORDINATION. All employees are expected to follow any work direction given by a supervisor as long as that direction is not immoral, unethical, unlawful, or dangerous to the health and safety of City employees or members of the public. It is not necessary for supervisors to state the work direction as an order, or to threaten disciplinary action if the employee fails to comply. Employees shall not disobey or refuse to follow orders, policies, or directives from management, and shall be considered insubordinate if they do so. *The following acts or omissions demonstrate conduct that is prohibited by this rule. This list of conduct is not exhaustive and does not encompass the totality of behavior prohibited by this rule.*

- (A) Refusing or failing to carry out or obey work directions or orders, policies, and procedures, whether oral or written, including disregard of the directions or orders of any authorized supervisor or designee.
- (B) Refusing, failing to co-operate, or impeding an internal investigation, whether the employee is a witness or the focus of the investigation.
- (C) Willfully violating any policies or procedures, whether Citywide, departmental or divisional.
- (D) Engaging in any other acts that are insubordinate and that are not specifically listed herein.

RULE 7. NEGLIGENCE OF DUTY. All employees are expected to perform their work duties during their work hours, to do a competent job in performing those duties, and to work except when they are at lunch or on an approved rest period as authorized by collective bargaining agreement or applicable policy. Employees shall perform their duties correctly and efficiently during their work hours, including any overtime hours. *The following acts or omissions demonstrate conduct that is prohibited by this rule. This list of conduct is not exhaustive and does not encompass the totality of behavior prohibited by this rule.*

- (A) Performing a job assignment carelessly or negligently.

- (B) Carelessly or negligently handling City information or documents, such as mail, checks, personnel or confidential files, including data storage devices.
- (C) Failing to meet work standards or comply with performance improvement plans.
- (D) Failing to obtain or maintain any licenses or certifications required to perform the duties of a position.
- (E) Stopping work or making preparation to leave work before specified quitting time without authorization.
- (F) Sleeping or wasting time during prescribed working hours.
- (G) Using or having personal items in the workplace or in City vehicles that interfere with an employee's duties.
- (H) Distributing literature, of any description, in working areas during working hours on City premises or in City vehicles without authorization.
- (I) Engaging in any other conduct that interferes with or prevents the prompt and acceptable completion of assigned job duties.

RULE 8. FAILURE OF GOOD BEHAVIOR. All employees are expected at all times to exercise common sense and conduct themselves in an appropriate professional manner. Employees should always be polite, courteous, considerate of co-workers and members of the public, and helpful to all. They should refrain from any conduct which might be offensive or demeaning to their co-workers or members of the public with whom they come in contact during the performance of their duties. *The following acts or omissions demonstrate conduct that is prohibited by this rule. This list of conduct is not exhaustive and does not encompass the totality of behavior prohibited by this rule.*

- (A) Disrupting the normal work routine by creating unnecessary noise, by starting or participating in arguments, or by otherwise interfering with the work operations or the work performed by co-workers.
- (B) Being rude, unprofessional, speaking loudly, or otherwise failing to be civil and courteous to any City employee or a member of the public, including but not limited to the use of profanity, insults, slurs, or derogatory or demeaning language either in person, or through any electronic device or medium (e.g., apps, phone, email, or text message).
- (C) Providing, failing to secure, or discussing confidential information with unauthorized individuals.
- (D) Behaving in an immoral or indecent manner, or engaging in conduct that gives the appearance of impropriety.
- (E) Any violation of the City Charter, Columbus City Codes, Ohio Revised Code or Ohio Administrative Code that has a nexus with City employment, including engaging in prohibited political activities.

- (F) Having been convicted of a crime, whether misdemeanor or felony, which has a nexus with City employment.
- (G) Failing to maintain a clean personal and professional appearance, including clean personal clothing or city-issued uniform and good personal hygiene.
- (H) Wearing clothing that is inappropriate for the workplace, for example, clothing more appropriate for leisure activities than work or failing to wear the designated uniform required in a particular division or work site.
- (I) Smoking, vaping, or using smokeless tobacco products such as dip, snuff, chew etc. in any City buildings, vehicles, or unauthorized area.
- (J) Gambling, including dice, cards, games of chance, or number racketeering, if it has a nexus to City employment.
- (K) Littering or contributing to poor housekeeping, unsanitary or unsafe conditions on City premises, job site, or in a City vehicle.
- (L) Accessing, soliciting, downloading, streaming, distributing, or creating pornographic content, or obscene or sexually explicit images on City-issued electronic devices or over the City's network or systems.
- (M) Aiding or cooperating with employees in the violation of work rules, policies, or directives.
- (N) Behaving or acting in any manner that would constitute misfeasance, malfeasance, or nonfeasance, not otherwise listed in these rules.

RULE 9. SAFETY. The City of Columbus wants to provide a safe and healthy work environment for all of its employees. Employees shall follow all safety rules and regulations under OSHA, state, or local guidelines, as well as City policies and directives regarding safety, and shall use all necessary safety equipment and protective gear as directed. Upon discovery, employees are to immediately report to their respective supervisor or safety personnel any unsafe conditions, injury to himself/herself, damage to City property, or injury or damage caused by the employee to another person or person's property in the employee's work activities. Employees are to maintain their respective workplaces in an orderly and safe condition and to operate vehicles and equipment in a safe and courteous manner in accordance to established procedures, manufacturer's operations guides, and/or Ohio law. *The following demonstrates conduct that is expected by all employees. This list of conduct is not exhaustive and does not encompass the totality of behavior expected by this rule.*

- (A) All employees are required to wear proper safety equipment as instructed by management and in accordance with OSHA, state or local standards.
 - (1) Proper eye and hearing protection must be worn when operating specified equipment, or in designated work areas.
 - (2) Hard hats must be worn when working in construction areas, designated hard hat areas, or as directed by management.

- (3) Proper footwear must be worn in order to provide the appropriate amount of protection.
- (4) Any other prescribed personal protective equipment must be worn as required by any department or division.
- (B) All City employees are required to maintain their respective work areas and City vehicles and all City properties in a clean, neat, and orderly fashion.
- (C) All employees are required to use the proper tools and equipment to perform jobs safely. All defective and improper tools must be reported to appropriate supervision as soon as possible.
- (D) All employees shall dress in clothing appropriate to their job, which includes but is not limited to the following considerations:
 - (1) Clothing should provide the employee with protection from chemicals, sun, or any other hazards, in accordance with OSHA, state, or local standards.
 - (2) Hair should be maintained in a secured fashion when working around moving machinery or dangerous chemicals.
 - (3) Jewelry, neckties, scarves, and any other items that might get caught in moving equipment should be removed or secured when operating that equipment.
- (E) While conducting City business, employees are required to operate City vehicles, personal vehicles, and all City equipment in a safe and courteous manner, and in accordance with the recommended safety procedures and all applicable motor vehicle laws. Seatbelts must be worn at all times during the operation of City vehicles, personal vehicles, and all City equipment.
- (F) Employees may not use City vehicles to transport unauthorized passengers.
- (G) All employees are required to comply with the safety rules and policies of their respective department and/or division. The safety rules of the State of Ohio Bureau of Employment Services and federal OSHA general industry and construction standards will prevail.

RULE 10. ADDITIONAL STANDARDS OF CONDUCT FOR SUPERVISORS, MANAGERS AND ADMINISTRATORS. Supervisors, managers, and administrators shall follow all of the above rules. Because these employees hold positions of responsibility and trust, they shall be held to a higher standard than the employees they supervise and must conduct themselves with diligence and in a manner above reproach. *The following acts or omissions demonstrate conduct that is prohibited by this rule for supervisors, managers, and administrators. This list of conduct is not exhaustive and does not encompass the totality of behavior prohibited by this rule.*

- (A) Aiding or cooperating with subordinate employees in the violation of work rules, policies, or directives.
- (B) Failing to discipline subordinates or to initiate formal disciplinary action against subordinates for violations of work rules, policies, or directives.
- (C) Failing to treat all subordinates in a fair and non-discriminatory manner.

- (D) Failing to perform supervisory, managerial, or administrative duties competently.
- (E) Using the position of supervisor, manager, or administrator for inappropriate personal gain.
- (F) Sharing confidential information entrusted to the supervisor, manager, or administrator.
- (G) Requiring employees to do personal work unrelated to their City job for the supervisor, manager, or administrator.
- (H) Failing to administer and support the policies, directives, or other requirements of the City, or otherwise engaging in conduct that undermines the mission or the reputation of the City.

DEFINITIONS FOR THE WORK RULES

MISFEASANCE – The performance of a lawful action in an illegal or improper manner

MALFEASANCE – Wrongdoing or misconduct by a public official

NONFEASANCE – Failure to do what should be done