

Employee Performance Improvement & Accountability Framework

This section outlines the university's approach to addressing employee conduct and performance concerns through fair, transparent, and policy-aligned corrective action. Our goal is to guide, support, and empower employees to succeed. By focusing on communication, growth, and mutual respect, we help ensure every team member contributes to a healthy and thriving campus community. ♥

Questions about Employee Performance Guidance? Contact the Human Resources office. We are happy to help!

A-State Human Resources
870-972-3454
hr@astate.edu

- [Progressive Discipline](#)
- [Performance Improvement Plan](#)

Progressive Discipline

[Employee Counseling Statement Link](#)

I need to start Progressive Discipline for one of my employees. Where do I start?

Contact the [Human Resources](#) department for any questions about the system policy or procedure relating to employee counseling and progressive discipline.

What is the university's Progressive Discipline Policy?

The ASU System utilizes a progressive discipline policy. It is the goal of the ASU System to use progressive steps in employee disciplinary matters except when immediate termination is warranted. The existence and use of a progressive discipline policy does not in any way alter the at-will status of employees.

The employee's supervisor will administer any appropriate corrective or disciplinary action. Appropriate action will be determined based on factors such as severity, frequency, and degree of deviation from expectations and length of time involved. Because of the great variety of situations that may arise, the university may need to make decisions related to employment in a manner other than as provided in this section.

Disciplinary actions may take place in several forms. The forms of disciplinary actions are Verbal Counseling, Written Counseling, Final Counseling, and Dismissal. Your Human Resources Department should be consulted when disciplinary action with an employee is necessary. The following outlines the four forms of disciplinary action.

Verbal Counseling: Verbal counseling sessions may take place between employees and supervisors in situations that are deemed less serious in nature. Every effort to determine and resolve the cause of the problem should be made. At the same time, however, it should be specifically stated that the employee is receiving a formal warning. Documentation of the verbal counseling should occur utilizing the Employee Counseling Form (available from the forms section of the Human Resources website). Copies of all documentation of verbal counseling should be distributed as follows: one copy to the employee, one copy to the department file, and one copy to your Human Resources Department for inclusion in the employee's personnel file.

Written Counseling: Written counseling sessions take place between a supervisor and an employee when the behavior of the employee is a repeated violation and verbal counseling has been administered, when the behavior hinders the operations of the department in which the employee works, or when the behavior hampers the progress of the university. Written warnings

should be documented on an Employee Counseling Form. Copies of all written warnings should be distributed as follows: one copy to the employee, one copy to the department file, and one copy to your Human Resources Department for inclusion in the employee's personnel file.

Final Counseling: Final counseling is utilized when previous counseling has failed to produce the proper results. Final Counseling may also be utilized to address an initial incident or an incident that is too severe for a verbal or written warning yet not sufficiently severe for dismissal. Copies of all Final Counseling Forms should be distributed as follows: one copy to the employee, one copy to the department file, and one copy to your Human Resources Department for inclusion in the employee's personnel file.

Dismissals: Employment may be terminated after other disciplinary measures have failed or when a first-time incident occurs that is extremely serious. An employee may be discharged at any time without regard to any progressive steps if he or she commits an offense for which immediate discharge is specified as a penalty or if, in the university's judgment, the employee's continued presence would be contrary to the well-being of the university or its employees. Your Human Resources Department should be consulted prior to the dismissal of an employee.

Where can I find the University's policy on Progressive Discipline?

The Progressive Discipline Policy is located within the staff handbook.

Questions about the Employee Progressive Discipline Policy? Contact [Human Resources](#) for guidance.

Performance Improvement Plan

Performance Improvement Plan (PIP):

[Performance Improvement Plan Form](#)

What is the purpose of a Performance Improvement Plan (PIP)?

A Performance Improvement Plan (PIP) is a structured, time-bound tool used to correct and clarify performance expectations, establish supports, and define success measures within a set timeline.

Depending on the seriousness or impact of the behavior, a PIP may be initiated as an early intervention or issued as a final opportunity to meet expectations without prior coaching.

When should I implement a Performance Improvement Plan (PIP)?

Use a PIP when **any** of the following are present:

- Sustained shortfalls against defined performance standards, deliverables, or deadlines,
- Quality or accuracy issues that materially affect students, colleagues, or operations,
- Patterns of unreliability (e.g., responsiveness, follow-through, preparation) that impede results,
- Professional conduct or collaboration concerns that hinder effective work (non-egregious),
- A serious incident that warrants a formal corrective plan in lieu of immediate separation.

Do not use a PIP for egregious misconduct or policy violations (e.g., discrimination, harassment, safety threats). Consult [HR](#) immediately; disciplinary procedures may be more appropriate.

What are the required components of a Performance Improvement Plan (PIP)?

- **Objective Summary of Issues:** Provide facts, concrete examples, dates, and data illustrating the performance gap and any historical context relevant to the current situation. Include prior notices if applicable.
- **Expectations:** Define expectations for improving the specific performance issue. Ensure expectations are specific and time-
- **Success Measures/Evidence:** Specify how progress will be verified (e.g., artifacts, data, reports, observations).
- **Support & Resources:** List what assistance will be provided and by whom (e.g., training, mentoring, job aids, technology, workload adjustments).
- **Timeline & Check-Ins:** Indicate frequency and specific meeting dates. A typical duration is 30–90 days with weekly/biweekly reviews.
- **Roles & Responsibilities:** actions required of the employee and the supervisor.

- **Consequences:** Per policy, continued deficiency may lead to further discipline up to and including termination. Any decision to terminate employment will be done in consultation with Human Resources.
 - **Signatures & Routing:** Obtain all required approvals and distribute copies (see below)
 - **Follow-Up:** Provide progress report to HR at the completion of check-ins and the completion of the PIP. Document the outcome: Met / Partially Met / Not Met (and next action).
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Signature Routing, Distribution, & Acknowledgement

Signatures and documentation routing will be determined by the employee's position type and unit/HR file retention practices.

- Faculty: faculty, chair, dean, the Office of the Provost, and Human Resources.
- Staff: employee, the supervisor/department head, and Human Resources.

Note: The employee's signature acknowledges receipt and discussion, not agreement. An employee response may be attached and included with the PIP packet.

Best Practices for Supervisors when implementing/completing a Performance Improvement Plan (PIP)

- When completing the PIP Template, supervisors may include as many or as few examples or points as needed; the numbered and bulleted lines are provided as a guide.
 - Use specific, objective language aligned with the position description and/or unit priorities; avoid generalities.
 - Adhere to the check-in cadence; provide written summaries.
 - Offer reasonable supports, log them, and track progress.
 - Consult HR and Academic Affairs if new issues (performance or conduct) arise.
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Questions about an Employee Performance Improvement Plan? Contact the Human Resources Department at 870-972-3454 or hr@astate.edu