

Louth Playgoers Society Limited



Summary

Policy Title

Disciplinary Policy

Purpose

To ensure that if standards of conduct/behaviour or performance fall below the required level, they are addressed in a fair and consistent manner.

To provide a fair means of deciding appropriate disciplinary sanctions.

Scope

This policy applies to all our employees and volunteers regardless of employment agreement or position.

Policy Governance

The following identifies who is accountable, responsible, informed or consulted with regard to this policy:

- Responsible – the person(s) responsible for developing this policy
- Accountable – the person who has ultimate accountability and authority for the policy
- Consulted – the person(s) or groups to be consulted prior to final policy implementation or amendment
- Informed – the person(s) or groups to be informed after policy implementation or amendment

Responsible	Chairperson of the Board
Accountable	Theatre Manager
Consulted	Board of Directors
Informed	All Employees and Volunteers

What could instigate disciplinary action?

Examples of issues, which will be dealt with as disciplinary matters include, but are not limited to:

Unauthorised absence	Failure to follow the Society's/Theatre's policies or procedures
Inappropriate conduct	Non-compliance of a reasonable instruction
Poor performance	Breach of the Code of Conduct
Breach of health and safety	Breach of the Safeguarding Policy
Misuse of email or internet	Abuse of sickness or other company benefits

Informal Action

Cases of minor misconduct or unsatisfactory performance are usually best dealt with informally. An informal conversation is often all that is required to improve conduct or performance. In some cases, additional training, coaching and advice may be what is needed.

The employee and Theatre Manager (or Company Secretary) should discuss the alleged concerns. The employee must be given a full opportunity to respond to the alleged concerns.

If, during the discussion, it becomes obvious that the matter may be more serious, the meeting should be adjourned. The employee should be told that the matter will be continued under the formal disciplinary procedure (see below).

At the conclusion of the meeting the Theatre Manager (or Company Secretary) should make a brief note outlining any agreed action plan and the possible implications should this not be met. Both the theatre manager (or Company Secretary) and employee should sign agreeing to the action plan. If not agreed, the Theatre Manager (or Company Secretary) will write to the employee detailing future expectations.

In some cases, Louth Playgoers Society Ltd. will encourage use of third party internal mediation so long as they are not involved in the issue.

Formal Action

Louth Playgoers Society Ltd. will undertake a full investigation before any disciplinary action is considered. This will normally be undertaken by the immediate line manager. Disciplinary sanctions are delegated as follows:

- Verbal Warning – Theatre Manager or board member designated by chairperson
- First Written Warning – Theatre Manager or board member designated by chairperson
- Final Written Warning and Dismissals – Chairperson and the Board

In certain cases, for example, in cases of gross misconduct, where relationships have broken down or there are risks to property or people, the employee may be suspended on full pay. Suspension is a neutral act and does not presume guilt or serve as a disciplinary sanction. Any suspension will be reviewed on a fortnightly basis and the decision communicated to the employee.

Stage 1: Investigate the case

It is important to carry out necessary investigations of potential disciplinary matters without unreasonable delay to establish the facts of the case.

At this initial stage, the employee must be informed of the allegation in writing. The employee must be informed that the initial enquiry does not constitute any form of disciplinary action.

The Theatre Manager (or Company Secretary) who will hear the case, if it requires a formal disciplinary hearing, will appoint another independent person (usually the employee's line manager) to conduct an investigation and collect information/statements relevant to the allegation(s) made. The person appointed must not have been involved in the matter being investigated.

Stage 2: Examining the evidence

Most cases will require the holding of an investigatory meeting between the investigatory manager and the employee. Statements may be taken from witnesses, if appropriate. Steps should be taken to protect a witness' identity if they believe personal risk exists if their identity becomes known. Advice and guidance can be provided by the theatre's legal advisors. An employee may be accompanied by a trusted friend or theatre colleague.

Stage 3: Examining the facts

Having established the facts, the investigatory Theatre manager (or Company Secretary) should make a recommendation to the Chairperson who will hear the case should disciplinary action be required. That recommendation should include an opinion about the appropriateness of disciplinary action. The Board will decide if disciplinary action is appropriate.