Support Staff Rules Governing Personal Conduct of Employees Policy

Policy

Applies to: University support staff

The Rules of Personal Conduct for Employees are intended to promote the orderly and efficient operation of Michigan State University, as well as to protect the rights of all employees. Violations, therefore, shall be regarded as cause for disciplinary action, up to and including discharge. Discharge may result from an accumulation of minor infractions, or for a single serious infraction.

Disciplinary action under these rules does not preclude an employee from discipline for violation of University policies or ordinances, criminal liability or sanctions for violation of local, state or federal laws.

These rules do not preclude any University department from establishing additional rules for its employees that are necessary for the effective operation of that department. This is not a comprehensive list of rules, and the University reserves the right to discipline employees for acts or omissions not stated below.

Each employee is required to conduct himself/herself in a professional manner at all times. The following are examples of prohibited conduct:

1. Sexual Harassment:

Sexual harassment is a form of unlawful gender (sex) discrimination and is not tolerated at Michigan State University. All employees should be familiar with the Policy on Sexual Harassment available on the web.

2. Sexual Conduct: Behavior of a sexual nature that is not sexual harassment may, nonetheless, be unprofessional in the workplace, disruptive in the classroom or violate other University policies. And, like other behavior that is unprofessional, disruptive, or violates a University policy or ordinance, it could warrant discipline.

Many types of behavior may constitute sexual harassment or sexual conduct including, but not limited to, the following:

- Sexual assault
- Threats or insinuations that lead the affected individual reasonably to believe that granting or denying sexual favors will affect his/her reputation, education, employment, advancement, or standing within the University
- Sexual advances, sexual propositions, or sexual demands that are not agreeable to both parties
- Unwelcome and persistent sexually explicit statements or stories that are not related to employment
- Sexually explicit e-mails or text messages
- Sexual misconduct such as stalking, cyber stalking, voyeurism, or recording or transmitting sexual images
- Repeated use of sexually degrading language or sounds to describe a person
- Unwanted and unnecessary touching, patting, hugging, or other physical contact
- Comments or questions about an individual’s sexual prowess, sexual deficiencies, or sexual behavior
- Dissemination of sexually explicit materials through the University's information technology resources
- Creation, dissemination, or display of offensive items or materials that disrupt the work environment including, but not limited to, photographs, graphics, symbols or video or audio recordings

3. Other Prohibited Harassment or Inappropriate Conduct:

Other Unlawful Harassment may occur when a University community member is subject to unwelcome conduct based on a category protected in the Anti-Discrimination Policy. These categories include: age, color, gender, gender identity, genetic information, disability status, height, marital status, national origin, political persuasion, race, religion, sexual orientation, veteran status, or weight. Unwelcome conduct that is objectively and subjectively severe, persistent or pervasive and creates an unreasonable interference with the individual’s work or education experience is considered harassment. For more details, see the ADP User's Manual online.

Behavior that is based on a protected category, but does not rise to the level of prohibited harassment under the ADP, may nonetheless be unprofessional in the workplace, disruptive in the classroom, or violate other University policies and, like other behavior that is
unprofessional, disruptive, or violates a University policy or ordinance, could warrant discipline.

4. Misconduct related to the use or possession of alcohol, illegal drugs, or controlled substances:

- Unauthorized consumption or possession of alcohol on University premises
- Consuming, distributing or possessing illegal drugs, as determined by state or federal law, on University premises
- Consuming, distributing, or possessing controlled substances on University premises without a prescription
- Selling or conspiracy to possess illegal drugs or controlled substances
- Unlawfully manufacturing, distributing, dispensing or using illegal drugs or controlled substances
- Being under the influence of alcohol when reporting to or while at work
- Being under the influence of illegal drugs (as determined by state or federal law) when reporting to or while at work
- Being under the influence of controlled substances without a prescription when reporting to or while at work
- Failing a required drug or alcohol screen
- Falsifying laboratory test results or samples
- Adulterating or attempting to adulterate a drug screening specimen

5. Noncompliance with safety rules and regulations:

- Failing to immediately report all accidents and/or injuries
- Failing to comply with safety rules and regulations established by unit supervisors, the Michigan State University Police Department, the Office of Radiation, Chemical and Biological Safety, or local, state or federal statute
- Failing to use safety apparel and equipment
- Failing to report unsafe conditions or practices
- Creating or contributing to disorderly, unclean, or unsafe working conditions

6. Improper behavior relating to attendance:

- Excessive absenteeism or tardiness
- Leaving work early or taking extended break periods
- Leaving the work area without permission
- Making preparation to leave work before the lunch period, break period, or the specified quitting time
- Failing to report for overtime work when scheduled
- Failing to start work at the designated time
- Failing to return from an authorized leave of absence or vacation at the designated time
- Improper use of leave time to cover an absence (e.g., sick leave, bereavement leave, Family Medical Leave Act, jury duty)
- Failure to properly and/or promptly report the reason(s) for being absent, if no previous arrangements were made with an appropriate supervisor

7. Negligent behavior relating to University property or the property of others:

- Malicious, negligent, or intentional destruction, damage, defacement or willful neglect of property of the University or another person
- Using/possessing the University's or another's property without authorization, including but not limited to, non-business use of University computers and peripheral equipment
- Unauthorized taking or attempting to take, misappropriate, conceal, or remove property of the University or of an employee, student, customer, supplier, vendor, visitor, patron or guest of the University
- Unauthorized use of the University telephones, computers, electronics, or other equipment during working or nonworking hours
- Knowingly admitting, or providing means of access to, an unauthorized person into any locked or restricted University building and/or area of the campus
- Knowingly providing means of access to the University's information technology resources to an unauthorized person
- Being on University premises without authorization unless on duty or have business as a member of the public
- Failing to report inappropriate use of University equipment or electronic systems

8. Poor work performance as evidenced by:

- Refusal or willful failure to carry out a supervisor's instructions, including the assigned duties of the position, when such instructions do not require unsafe or illegal acts
- Neglect of duty and/or lack of due care or diligence in the performance of duties
- Unsatisfactory work performance or failure to maintain reasonable standards of performance, production, or professionalism
- Improper documentation, destruction, falsification, alteration, deletion, or omission related to University forms, records, or reports (e.g., production records, time records, employment applications, and medical records), including, but not limited to, false claims for wages, benefits, insurance, leave of absence, and/or providing false information for personal gain
- Unauthorized disclosure or misuse of records or other business information
- Non-work related use of official position and influence for personal gain
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9. Inappropriate behavior or conduct related to the treatment of others:

- Utterance or publication of any threat, threatening, intimidating, obstructing, and/or harassing other persons
- Fighting and/or instigating a fight
- Bullying (using verbal, physical, or psychological abuse) or otherwise mistreating a supervisor, co-worker, student, member of the public, supplier, vendor, or guest
- Engaging in aggressive, hostile, or violent behavior, such as intimidation of others
- Attempting to instill fear in others
- Engaging in belligerent speech, excessive arguing or swearing
- Sabotage or threats of sabotage

10. Other misconduct including but not limited to:

- Using vulgar or obscene language
- Gambling or engaging in other games of lottery on University time or premises
- Exhibiting immoral conduct
- Retaliating against an individual who makes a complaint of harassment
- Possessing weapons, firearms, hazardous materials or explosives on University premises (unless authorized in the course of employment)
- Engaging in horseplay or practical jokes that endanger or disrupt employees or University property
- Smoking in unauthorized areas or inappropriately disposing of smoking materials including the use or improper disposal of electronic cigarettes
- Sleeping, loitering, or loafing on the job
- Failing to maintain proper grooming, dress, cleanliness, or hygiene. Dress or appearance should not be distracting to other employees and should be within acceptable standards of health, safety, and public contact
- Working for pay at other employment while on leave (e.g., medical or sick leave) from the University without prior authorization
- Failing to disclose outside interests that may conflict with the interests of the University including, but not limited to, financial, employment, or other business interests
- Vending, soliciting, or collecting contributions on University time or premises without prior appropriate authorization
- Making defamatory statements about other University employees, including supervisors, or making disparaging statements to the public concerning University business
- Knowingly making false statements about University business or employees
- Failing to maintain appropriate licensures and/or certifications in accordance with job requirements
- Off duty misconduct, including committing illegal acts, that reflects adversely upon the University or adversely affects the employee's ability/credibility to fulfill his/her job responsibilities
- Obtaining, or attempting to obtain, unemployment benefits to which the employee is not entitled. This includes, but is not limited to, providing false information to the Michigan Unemployment Insurance Agency (MUIA), failing to report all wages to the Michigan UIA while collecting unemployment benefits, or failing to promptly notify the Michigan UIA when benefits are paid in excess of those allowed by law or when benefit payments should cease
- Failure to disclose and/or inform the employer of convictions that would result in the inability or restriction to operate University equipment or vehicles

Refer questions to: MSU Human Resources Employee Relations (telephone 517-353-5510, e-mail)

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