5.12 Counselling and Discipline Procedure

**Procedure**

All counselling and discipline processes should occur only with the permission of the CEO; this does not include advice, correction, and debriefing in everyday supervision but refers to serious or out-of-the-ordinary matters. In the case of volunteers the immediate supervisor will be responsible in consultation with the <Insert Position>.

**Steps for Counselling or Discipline**

Once the need for a counselling or disciplinary process has been identified, the following steps should occur:

1. **Written Notice**

* The volunteer must be advised in writing before the counselling or disciplinary meeting takes place. The letter should detail:
  + the reason for the meeting and contain any written documentation or allegations;
  + advise of the options of a support person to attend;
  + advise of any possible outcomes from the meeting such as a warning or termination.
* It is preferable to give at least 24 hours’ notice prior to the interview time; however the volunteer may negotiate a different time, including an earlier time.

1. **Meeting**

* During the meeting the volunteer should be provided with information about the concerns, alleged incident or issues. They should then have an opportunity in the meeting to provide an explanation for their behaviour or conduct. The volunteer may request additional time to prepare their defence; alternatively <Insert Organisation Name> may suspend the interview at this point if further investigation is required. In these cases a further meeting will be scheduled.
* In some situations <Insert Organisation Name> may deem if necessary to suspend the volunteer until a further meeting has occurred.
* All counselling and disciplinary meetings will be documented on the relevant forms including the Discipline Record of Interview Form.
* Where a disciplinary process may lead to termination this will be conducted by the CEO.

**Documentation**

All processes must be documented and signed by the volunteer and supervising staff or <Insert Position>, and filed in the volunteer’s personnel record. Where a warning has been given this will also be included in the documentation. Although the counselling process is not as formal as the disciplinary process it is important that a record of the interview be kept. A copy of all documentation will be provided to the volunteer.

**Warnings**

<Insert Organisation Name> will use a system of warnings prior to dismissal, except where gross misconduct has occurred, as outlined in the Counselling and Discipline Policy. All warnings will be made in writing following a counselling or disciplinary interview. Warnings will clearly identify the misconduct or poor performance. The warning may also state dismissal may occur if the behaviour in question continues. Volunteers may receive up to two written warnings before a final warning, depending on the severity of the incident or issue. Where the disciplinary process has progressed to a point where termination is possible, <Insert Organisation Name> will advise the volunteer of the seriousness of the situation and possible outcomes.

**Immediate Dismissal**

Where serious misconduct has occurred it may not be necessary or appropriate to go through the above steps. The CEO will be responsible for any process that may lead to immediate dismissal. Where this occurs a Notice of Dismissal Form will be completed by the CEO and a copy given to the volunteer.

**Application**

This procedure applies to all volunteers; its application lies with the CEO, <Insert Position> and supervising staff.

**Standards**

1.1-1.4, 2.1-2.3, 3.3, 4.4, 5.1, 5.4, 5.5, 6.1-6.3, 8.1, 8.4

**Related Policies and Procedures**

* Commitment to Volunteer Involvement Policy
* Risk Management Policy and Procedure
* Anti-Discrimination and Harassment Policy and Procedure
* Work Health and Safety Policy and Procedures
* Communication with Volunteers Policy and Procedure
* Volunteer Supervision Policy and Procedure
* Grievance and Dispute Resolution Policy and Procedure
* Volunteer Confidentiality Policy and Procedure
* Documentation and Records Policy and Procedures
* <Insert Organisation Name> Staff Counselling and Discipline Policy and Procedure
* <Insert Organisation Name> Staff Confidentiality and Privacy Policy and Procedure

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| Approved | CEO, | Signature |  |
| Review | Annual | Next Review Date |  |