



Brandeis University

Conduct Standards and Corrective Action

Policy Statement

Brandeis strives to create and maintain a positive and productive work environment where open communication among staff at all levels is the cornerstone of positive, constructive working relationships. To achieve this, Brandeis encourages courteous and respectful behavior with members of the Brandeis community and visitors, respect for Brandeis University property and individual property and responsible approaches toward work.

Managers and supervisors are encouraged to provide employees with a constructive work environment where expected standards of performance, conduct, and work habits are clearly communicated. There should be regular discussion with employees about the positive and negative aspects of their performance, conduct, and work habits and if change is required, it should be clearly communicated what employees need to change in order to be successful in their positions.

Brandeis expects that employees will conduct themselves in a manner consistent with the highest standards of professional conduct, and act in a manner conducive to a harmonious, pleasant work environment. Performance or conduct that does not meet these standards will not be tolerated, nor will any inappropriate release of confidential or sensitive information or behavior that shows a serious lack of judgment. Continued employment requires that employees meet these standards.

Applicability

This policy applies to all employees, except bargaining unit employees covered by the provisions of the applicable collective bargaining agreement.

Guidelines:

Corrective Action Process

If an employee's performance, conduct, or work habits are inconsistent with expected standards, the employee's manager or supervisor should communicate the areas of needed improvement to the employee.

If the performance, work habit, or conduct of a staff member is considered unsatisfactory, and the employee has completed the initial review period, the University's formal corrective action procedure is ordinarily followed.

Corrective Action is the process generally used at Brandeis to address issues of employee performance, poor work habits, or inappropriate conduct. The primary objective of corrective action is to allow an employee the opportunity to improve or correct an area of concern by making him or her aware of the problem. Corrective action may be taken at any time it is apparent that there is a concern regarding an employee's performance or conduct, or there is failure to correct problems that have been previously discussed. Generally, an employee would receive one or any combination of the corrective action steps before dismissal. However, in some circumstances, it may be appropriate to terminate employment without notice or prior corrective action. Corrective action steps may include:

- Oral counseling
- Written counseling
- Final written warning
- Termination of employment

The nature of the problem and the particular circumstances determine whether or not all the steps are followed or whether a more advanced step is appropriate to the situation. Managers and supervisors are strongly urged to contact the Office of Human Resources before proceeding with any written corrective action step, and dismissals must be discussed with and reviewed by the Office of Human Resources and approved by the department head or senior manager prior to taking final action.

Corrective Action Document

Employees may refuse to sign a corrective action document or may make a notation that the signature doesn't necessarily indicate agreement. If the employee elects not to sign, the Supervisor should indicate this on the document. Employees must be provided a copy of any corrective action document and be notified within ten (10) days that it will be submitted to the Office of Human Resources to be filed in the employee's personnel file.

Administrative Leave

In certain circumstances it may be appropriate to place an employee on administrative leave when an issue of misconduct must be investigated.

Personnel Records

Performance appraisals and written corrective action documentation become part of the employee's personnel file in the Office of Human Resources and may be considered in regard to employment decisions and actions, including transfers and promotions. Managers and supervisors should send the original signed copy of the written corrective action plan to the attention of the Vice President for Human Resources or his/her designee. Human Resources staff will notify the employee within ten (10) days that a copy will be placed in the personnel file. An employee has the ability to append a rebuttal to any document in her or his personnel file.

Standards of Conduct

While it is not possible for the University to define every situation that would be unacceptable, the following standards of conduct have been developed to assist employees in understanding the University's expectations of them. This list provides guidelines for monitoring conduct and is not intended to be a complete list of behaviors that may be unacceptable at Brandeis. Brandeis reserves the right to take corrective action or release an employee from employment for conduct other than the given examples.

The following conduct may result in termination, with or without prior warning. It is expected that supervisors will contact the Office of Human Resources before taking such action. It is every employee's responsibility to take an active part in making sure that Brandeis is a safe and productive work environment. Employees who witness such behavior, should report it to their manager/supervisor or the Office of Human Resources immediately.

- Any conduct, including failure to abide by safety rules and policies, which could result in personal injury or injury to another individual, or damage to property.
- Fighting, assault, gambling or other disorderly conduct.
- Conduct that is detrimental or improper toward students, visitors, or other employees or faculty.

- Serious disorderly conduct including intimidating, threatening or violent behavior of any type and possession of a weapon including, but not limited to guns, knives, ammunition, or explosives.
- The unauthorized possession, distribution, use of or being under the influence of alcohol or non-prescribed drugs/controlled substances while on University premises or during working hours.
- Theft, misuse, willful damage or destruction of University property or the personal property of a student, faculty member, staff member, vendor, or visitor.
- Insubordination or refusal to perform assigned tasks.
- Falsification of employment, payroll, medical or other documents.
- Fraud or misrepresentation of University-related information.
- Inappropriate release of sensitive and confidential information such as salaries, student records, trade secrets or personal information about an employee or group of employees.
- Gross incompetence.
- Violation of Brandeis University Non-Discrimination and Harassment Policy.

Employment-at-Will:

Brandeis is committed to the principles of corrective action as discussed in this policy and, as such, will ordinarily provide employees with advance oral and/or written notice prior to dismissal.

However, Brandeis also reserves its right as an employer-at-will and may end an individual's employment at any time, with or without cause, and with or without notice. To ensure that the University's policies have been followed, the Office of Human Resources will review proposed dismissals, and a department head or senior manager will review and, if appropriate, approve dismissals prior to a manager taking action.

Appeal Process

Employees receiving written counseling or warnings may appeal these decisions in compliance with the University's Appeal Policy.

For questions related to this policy or for assistance in the administration of this policy contact the Office of Human Resources. Nothing in this policy or other Brandeis policies shall be interpreted to be in conflict with or to eliminate or modify in any way the employment-at-will status of employees of Brandeis University.

This policy is for general guidance only. It does not create an employment contract or any right to continued employment at Brandeis University. Brandeis University reserves the right to modify, revoke, suspend, terminate and/or change any and all policies and procedures at any time, with or without notice.

*Office of Human Resources
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